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GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN

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GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN

CHAPTER ONE

In a Japanese Garden

★

§ 1

My little two-story house by the Ōhashigawa, although dainty as a bird-cage, proved much too small for comfort at the approach of the hot season, – the rooms being scarcely higher than steamship cabins, and so narrow that an ordinary mosquito-net could not be suspended in them. I was sorry to lose the beautiful lake view, but I found it necessary to remove to the northern quarter of the city, into a very quiet street behind the mouldering castle. My new home is a katchiū-yashiki, the ancient residence of some samurai of high rank. It is shut off from the street, or rather roadway, skirting the castle moat by a long, high wall coped with tiles. One ascends to the gateway, which is almost as large as that of a temple court, by a low broad flight of stone steps; and projecting from the wall, to the right of the gate, is a look-out window, heavily barred, like a big wooden cage. Thence, in feudal days, armed retainers kept keen watch on all who passed by, – invisible watch, for the bars are set so closely that a face behind them cannot be seen from the roadway. Inside the gate the approach to the dwelling is also walled in on both sides, so that the visitor, unless privileged, could see before him only the house entrance, always closed with white shōji. Like all samurai homes, the residence itself is but one story high, but there are fourteen rooms within, and these are lofty, spacious, and beautiful. There is, alas, no lake view nor any charming prospect. Part of the O-Shiroyama, with the castle on its summit, half concealed by a park of pines, may be seen above the coping of the front wall, but only a part; and scarcely a hundred yards behind the house rise densely wooded heights, cutting off not only the horizon, but a large slice of the sky as well. For this immurement,

however, there exists fair compensation in the shape of a very pretty garden, or rather a series of garden spaces, which surround the dwelling on three sides. Broad verandas overlook these, and from a certain veranda angle I can enjoy the sight of two gardens at once. Screens of bamboos and woven rushes, with wide gateless openings in their midst, mark the boundaries of the three divisions of the pleasure-grounds. But these structures are not intended to serve as true fences; they are ornamental, and only indicate where one style of landscape gardening ends and another begins.

§ 2

Now a few words upon Japanese gardens in general.

After having learned – merely by seeing, for the practical knowledge of the art requires years of study and experience, besides a natural, instinctive sense of beauty – something about the Japanese manner of arranging flowers, one can thereafter consider European ideas of floral decoration only as vulgarities. This observation is not the result of any hasty enthusiasm, but a conviction settled by long residence in the interior. I have come to understand the unspeakable loveliness of a solitary spray of blossoms arranged as only a Japanese expert knows how to arrange it, – not by simply poking the spray into a vase, but by perhaps one whole hour's labour of trimming and posing and daintiest manipulation, – and therefore I cannot think now of what we Occidentals call a 'bouquet' as anything but a vulgar murdering of flowers, an outrage upon the colour-sense, a brutality, an abomination. Somewhat in the same way, and for similar reasons, after having learned what an old Japanese garden is, I can remember our costliest gardens at home only as ignorant displays of what wealth can accomplish in the creation of incongruities that violate nature.

Now a Japanese garden is not a flower garden; neither is it

made for the purpose of cultivating plants. In nine cases out of ten there is nothing in it resembling a flower-bed. Some gardens may contain scarcely a sprig of green; some have nothing green at all, and consist entirely of rocks and pebbles and sand, although these are exceptional.[1] As a rule, a Japanese garden is a landscape garden, yet its existence does not depend upon any fixed allowances of space. It may cover one acre or many acres. It may also be only ten feet square. It may, in extreme cases, be much less; for a certain kind of Japanese garden can be contrived small enough to put in a tokonoma. Such a garden, in a vessel no larger than a fruit-dish, is called koniwa or toko-niwa, and may occasionally be seen in the tokonoma of humble little dwellings so closely squeezed between other structures as to possess no ground in which to cultivate an outdoor garden. (I say 'an outdoor garden,' because there are indoor gardens, both upstairs and downstairs, in some large Japanese houses.) The toko-niwa is usually made in some curious bowl, or shallow carved box or quaintly shaped vessel impossible to describe by any English word. Therein are created minuscule hills with minuscule houses upon them, and microscopic ponds and rivulets spanned by tiny humped bridges; and queer wee plants do duty for trees, and curiously formed pebbles stand for rocks, and there are tiny tōrō, perhaps a tiny torii as well, – in short, a charming and living model of a Japanese landscape.

Another fact of prime importance to remember is that, in order to comprehend the beauty of a Japanese garden, it is

[1] Such as the garden attached to the abbot's palace at Tokuwa-monji, cited by Mr. Conder, which was made to commemorate the legend of stones which bowed themselves in assent to the doctrine of Buddha. At Togo-ike, in Tottori-ken, I saw a very large garden consisting almost entirely of stones and sand. The impression which the designer had intended to convey was that of approaching the sea over a verge of dunes, and the illusion was beautiful.

necessary to understand – or at least to learn to understand – the beauty of stones. Not of stones quarried by the hand of man, but of stones shaped by nature only. Until you can feel, and keenly feel, that stones have character, that stones have tones and values, the whole artistic meaning of a Japanese garden cannot be revealed to you. In the foreigner, however æsthetic he may be, this feeling needs to be cultivated by study. It is inborn in the Japanese; the soul of the race comprehends Nature infinitely better than we do, at least in her visible forms. But although, being an Occidental, the true sense of the beauty of stones can be reached by you only through long familiarity with the Japanese use and choice of them, the characters of the lessons to be acquired exist everywhere about you, if your life be in the interior. You cannot walk through a street without observing tasks and problems in the æsthetics of stones for you to master. At the approaches to temples, by the side of roads, before holy groves, and in all parks and pleasure-grounds, as well as in all cemeteries, you will notice large, irregular, flat slabs of natural rock – mostly from the river-beds and water-worn – sculptured with ideographs, but unhewn. These have been set up as votive tablets, as commemorative monuments, as tombstones, and are much more costly than the ordinary cut-stone columns and haka chiselled with the figures of divinities in relief. Again, you will see before most of the shrines, nay, even in the grounds of nearly all large homesteads, great irregular blocks of granite or other hard rock, worn by the action of torrents, and converted into water-basins (*chodzubachi*) by cutting a circular hollow in the top. Such are but common examples of the utilization of stones even in the poorest villages; and if you have any natural artistic sentiment, you cannot fail to discover, sooner or later, how much more beautiful are these natural forms than any shapes from the hand of the stone-cutter. It is probable, too,

that you will become so habituated at last to the sight of inscriptions cut upon rock surfaces, especially if you travel much through the country, that you will often find yourself involuntarily looking for texts or other chisellings where there are none, and could not possibly be, as if ideographs belonged by natural law to rock formation. And stones will begin, perhaps, to assume for you a certain individual or physiognomical aspect, – to suggest moods and sensations, as they do to the Japanese. Indeed, Japan is particularly a land of suggestive shapes in stone, as high volcanic lands are apt to be; and such shapes doubtless addressed themselves to the imagination of the race at a time long prior to the date of that archaic text which tells of demons in Izumo 'who made rocks, and the roots of trees, and leaves, and the foam of the green waters to speak.'

As might be expected in a country where the suggestiveness of natural forms is thus recognized, there are in Japan many curious beliefs and superstitions concerning stones. In almost every province there are famous stones supposed to be sacred or haunted, or to possess miraculous powers, such as the Women's Stone at the temple of Hachiman at Kamakura, and the Sesshō-seki, or Death Stone of Nasu, and the Wealth-giving Stone at Enoshima, to which pilgrims pay reverence. There are even legends of stones having manifested sensibility, like the tradition of the Nodding Stones which bowed down before the monk Daita when he preached unto them the word of Buddha; or the ancient story from the *Kojiki*, that the Emperor O-Jin, being augustly intoxicated, 'smote with his august staff a great stone in the middle of the Ohosaka road, *whereupon the stone ran away!*'[1]

Now stones are valued for their beauty; and large stones selected for their shape may have an æsthetic worth of hundreds of dollars. And large stones form the skeleton, or frame-

[1] The *Kojiki*, translated by Professor B. H. Chamberlain, p. 254.

work, in the design of old Japanese gardens. Not only is every stone chosen with a view to its particular expressiveness of form, but every stone in the garden or about the premises has its separate and individual name, indicating its purpose or its decorative duty. But I can tell you only a little, a very little, of the folk-lore of a Japanese garden; and if you want to know more about stones and their names, and about the philosophy of gardens, read the unique essay of Mr. Conder on the Art of Landscape Gardening in Japan,[1] and his beautiful book on the Japanese Art of Floral Decoration; and also the brief but charming chapter on Gardens, in Morse's *Japanese Homes*.[2]

§ 3

No effort to create an impossible or purely ideal landscape is made in the Japanese garden. Its artistic purpose is to copy faithfully the attractions of a veritable landscape, and to convey the real impression that a real landscape communicates. It is therefore at once a picture and a poem; perhaps even more a poem than a picture. For as nature's scenery, in its varying aspects, affects us with sensations of joy or of solemnity, of grimness or of sweetness, of force or of peace, so must the true reflection of it in the labour of the landscape gardener create

[1] Since this paper was written, Mr. Conder has published a beautiful illustrated volume,—*Landscape Gardening in Japan*. By Josiah Conder, F.R.I.B.A. Tōkyō: 1893. A photographic supplement to the work gives views of the most famous gardens in the capital and elsewhere.

[2] The observations of Dr. Rein on Japanese gardens are not to be recommended, in respect either to accuracy or to comprehension of the subject. Rein spent only two years in Japan, the larger part of which time he devoted to the study of the lacquer industry, the manufacture of silk and paper, and other practical matters. On these subjects his work is justly valued. But his chapters on Japanese manners and customs, art, religion, and literature show extremely little acquaintance with those topics.

not merely an impression of beauty, but a mood in the soul. The grand old landscape gardeners, those Buddhist monks who first introduced the art into Japan, and subsequently developed it into an almost occult science, carried their theory yet farther than this. They held it possible to express moral lessons in the design of a garden, and abstract ideas, such as Chastity, Faith, Piety, Content, Calm, and Connubial Bliss. Therefore were gardens contrived according to the character of the owner, whether poet, warrior, philosopher, or priest. In those ancient gardens (the art, alas, is passing away under the withering influence of the utterly commonplace Western taste) there were expressed both a mood of nature and some rare Oriental conception of a mood of man.

I do not know what human sentiment the principal division of my garden was intended to reflect; and there is none to tell me. Those by whom it was made passed away long generations ago, in the eternal transmigration of souls. But as a poem of nature it requires no interpreter. It occupies the front portion of the grounds, facing south; and it also extends west to the verge of the northern division of the garden, from which it is partly separated by a curious screen-fence structure. There are large rocks in it, heavily mossed; and divers fantastic basins of stone for holding water; and stone lamps green with years; and a shachihoko, such as one sees at the peaked angles of castle roofs, – a great stone fish, an idealized porpoise, with its nose in the ground and its tail in the air.[1] There are miniature hills, with old trees upon them; and there are long slopes of green, shadowed by flowering shrubs, like river banks; and there are green knolls like islets. All these verdant elevations

[1] This attitude of the shachihoko is somewhat *de rigueur*, whence the common expression *shachihoko dai*, signifying 'to stand on one's head.'

rise from spaces of pale yellow sand, smooth as a surface of silk and miming the curves and meanderings of a river course. These sanded spaces are not to be trodden upon; they are much too beautiful for that. The least speck of dirt would mar their effect; and it requires the trained skill of an experienced native gardener – a delightful old man he is – to keep them in perfect form. But they are traversed in various directions by lines of flat unhewn rock slabs, placed at slightly irregular distances from one another, exactly like stepping-stones across a brook. The whole effect is that of the shores of a still stream in some lovely, lonesome, drowsy place.

There is nothing to break the illusion, so secluded the garden is. High walls and fences shut out streets and contiguous things; and the shrubs and the trees, heightening and thickening toward the boundaries, conceal from view even the roofs of the neighbouring katchiū-yashiki. Softly beautiful are the tremulous shadows of leaves on the sunned sand; and the scent of flowers comes thinly sweet with every waft of tepid air; and there is a humming of bees.

§ 4

By Buddhism all existences are divided into *Hijō*, things without desire, such as stones and trees; and *Ujō*, things having desire, such as men and animals. This division does not, so far as I know, find expression in the written philosophy of gardens; but it is a convenient one. The folk-lore of my little domain relates both to the inanimate and the animate. In natural order, the Hijō may be considered first, beginning with a singular shrub near the entrance of the yashiki, and close to the gate of the first garden.

Within the front gateway of almost every old samurai house, and usually near the entrance of the dwelling itself, there is to be seen a small tree with large and peculiar leaves. The name

of this tree in Izumo is tegashiwa, and there is one beside my door. What the scientific name of it is I do not know; nor am I quite sure of the etymology of the Japanese name. However, there is a word tegashi, meaning a bond for the hands; and the shape of the leaves of the tegashiwa somewhat resembles the shape of a hand.

Now, in old days, when the samurai retainer was obliged to leave his home in order to accompany his daimyō to Yedo, it was customary, just before his departure, to set before him a baked tai[1] served up on a tegashiwa leaf. After this farewell repast the leaf upon which the tai had been served was hung up above the door as a charm to bring the departed knight safely back again. This pretty superstition about the leaves of the tegashiwa had its origin not only in their shape but in their movement. Stirred by a wind they seemed to beckon, – not indeed after our Occidental manner, but in the way that a Japanese signs to his friend to come, by gently waving his hand up and down with the palm towards the ground.

Another shrub to be found in most Japanese gardens is the nanten,[2] about which a very curious belief exists. If you have an evil dream, a dream which bodes ill luck, you should whisper it to the nanten early in the morning, and then it will never come true.[3] There are two varieties of this graceful

[1] The magnificent perch called tai (*Serranus marginalis*), which is very common along the Izumo coast, is not only justly prized as the most delicate of Japanese fish, but is also held to be an emblem of good fortune. It is a ceremonial gift at weddings and on congratulatory occasions. The Japanese call it also 'the king of fishes.'

[2] *Nandina domestica.*

[3] The most lucky of all dreams, they say in Izumo, is a dream of Fuji, the Sacred Mountain. Next in order of good omen is dreaming of a falcon (*taka*). The third best subject for a dream is the egg-plant (*nasubi*). To dream of the sun or of the moon is very lucky; but it is still more so to dream of stars. For a young wife it is most for-

plant: one which bears red berries, and one which bears white. The latter is rare. Both kinds grow in my garden. The common variety is placed close to the veranda (perhaps for the convenience of dreamers); the other occupies a little flower-bed in the middle of the garden, together with a small citron-tree. This most dainty citron-tree is called 'Buddha's fingers,'[1] because of the wonderful shape of its fragrant fruits. Near it stands a kind of laurel, with lanciform leaves glossy as bronze; it is called by the Japanese yuzuri-ha,[2] and is almost as common in the gardens of old samurai homes as the tegashiwa itself. It is held to be a tree of good omen, because no one of its old leaves ever falls off before a new one, growing behind it, has well developed. For thus the yuzuri-ha symbolizes hope that the father will not pass away before his son has become a vigorous man, well able to succeed him as the head of the family. Therefore, on every New Year's Day, the leaves of the yuzuriha, mingled with fronds of fern, are attached to the shimenawa which is then suspended before every Izumo home.

tunate to dream of *swallowing a star*: this signifies that she will become the mother of a beautiful child. To dream of a cow is a good omen; to dream of a horse is lucky, but it signifies travelling. To dream of rain or fire is good. Some dreams are held in Japan, as in the West, 'to go by contraries.' Therefore to dream of having one's house burned up, or of funerals, or of being dead, or of talking to the ghost of a dead person, is good. Some dreams which are good for women mean the reverse when dreamed by men; for example, it is good for a woman to dream that her nose bleeds, but for a man this is very bad. To dream of much money is a sign of loss to come. To dream of the *koi*, or of any freshwater fish, is the most unlucky of all. This is curious, for in other parts of Japan the koi is a symbol of good fortune.

[1] *Tebushukan: Citrus sarkodactilis.*

[2] *Yuzuru* signifies to resign in favour of another; *ha* signifies a leaf. The botanical name, as given in Hepburn's dictionary, is *Daphniphillum macropodum.*

§ 5

The trees, like the shrubs, have their curious poetry and legends. Like the stones, each tree has its special landscape name according to its position and purpose in the composition. Just as rocks and stones form the skeleton of the ground-plan of a garden, so pines form the framework of its foliage design. They give body to the whole. In this garden there are five pines, – not pines tormented into fantasticalities, but pines made wondrously picturesque by long and tireless care and judicious trimming. The object of the gardener has been to develop to the utmost possible degree their natural tendency to rugged line and massings of foliage, – that spiny sombre-green foliage which Japanese art is never weary of imitating in metal inlay or golden lacquer. The pine is a symbolic tree in this land of symbolism. Ever green, it is at once the emblem of unflinching purpose and of vigorous old age; and its needle-shaped leaves are credited with the power of driving demons away.

There are two sakuranoki,[1] Japanese cherry-trees, – those trees whose blossoms, as Professor Chamberlain so justly observes, are 'beyond comparison more lovely than anything Europe has to show.' Many varieties are cultivated and loved; those in my garden bear blossoms of the most ethereal pink, a flushed white. When, in spring, the trees flower, it is as though fleeciest masses of cloud faintly tinged by sunset had floated down from the highest sky to fold themselves about the branches. This comparison is no poetical exaggeration; neither is it original: it is an ancient Japanese description of the most marvellous floral exhibition which nature is capable of making. The reader who has never seen a cherry-tree blossoming in Japan cannot possibly imagine the delight of the spectacle. There are no green leaves; these come later: there is

[1] *Cerasus pseudo-cerasus* (Lindley).

only one glorious burst of blossoms, veiling every twig and bough in their delicate mist; and the soil beneath each tree is covered deep out of sight by fallen petals as by a drift of pink snow.

But these are cultivated cherry-trees. There are others which put forth their leaves before their blossoms, such as the yamazakura, or mountain cherry.[1] This, too, however, has its poetry of beauty and of symbolism. Sang the great Shintō writer and poet, Motowori:

Shikishima no
Yamato-gokoro wo
Hito-towaba,
Asa-hi ni niou
Yamazakura bana.[2]

Whether cultivated or uncultivated, the Japanese cherry-trees are emblems. Those planted in old samurai gardens were not cherished for their loveliness alone. Their spotless blossoms were regarded as symbolizing that delicacy of sentiment and blamelessness of life belonging to high courtesy and true knightliness. 'As the cherry flower is first among flowers,' says an old proverb, 'so should the warrior be first among men.'

[1] About this mountain cherry there is a humorous saying which illustrates the Japanese love of puns. In order fully to appreciate it, the reader should know that Japanese nouns have no distinction of singular and plural. The word *ha*, as pronounced, may signify either 'leaves' or 'teeth'; and the word *hana*, either 'flowers' or 'nose.' The yamazakura puts forth its ha (leaves) before his hana (flowers). Wherefore a man whose ha (teeth) project in advance of his hana (nose) is called a yamazakura. Prognathism is not uncommon in Japan, especially among the lower classes.

[2] 'If one should ask you concerning the heart of a true Japanese, point to the wild cherry flower glowing in the sun.'

Shadowing the western end of this garden, and projecting its smooth dark limbs above the awning of the veranda, is a superb umenoki, Japanese plum-tree, very old, and originally planted here, no doubt, as in other gardens, for the sake of the sight of its blossoming. The flowering of the umenoki,[1] in the earliest spring, is scarcely less astonishing than that of the cherry-tree, which does not bloom for a full month later; and the blossoming of both is celebrated by popular holidays. Nor are these, although the most famed, the only flowers thus loved. The wistaria, the convolvulus, the peony, each in its season, form displays of efflorescence lovely enough to draw whole populations out of the cities into the country to see them. In Izumo, the blossoming of the peony is especially marvellous. The most famous place for this spectacle is the little island of Daikonshima, in the grand Naka-umi lagoon, about an hour's sail from Matsue. In May the whole island flames crimson with peonies; and even the boys and girls of the public schools are given a holiday, in order that they may enjoy the sight.

Though the plum flower is certainly a rival in beauty of the sakura-no-hana, the Japanese compare woman's beauty – physical beauty – to the cherry flower, never to the plum flower. But womanly virtue and sweetness, on the other hand, are compared to the ume-no-hana, never to the cherry blossom. It is a great mistake to affirm, as some writers have done, that the Japanese never think of comparing a woman to trees and flowers. For grace, a maiden is likened to a slender willow;[2] for youthful charm, to the cherry-tree in flower; for sweetness of heart, to the blossoming plum-tree. Nay, the old Japanese

[1] There are three noteworthy varieties: one bearing red, one pink and white, and one pure white flowers.

[2] The expression *yanagi-goshi*, 'a willow-waist,' is one of several in common use comparing slender beauty to the willow-tree.

poets have compared woman to all beautiful things. They have even sought similes from flowers for her various poses, for her movements, as in the verse,

Tateba shakuyaku;[1]
Suwareba botan;
Aruku sugatawa
Himeyuri[2] *no hana.*[3]

Why, even the names of the humblest country girls are often those of beautiful trees or flowers prefixed by the honorific *O*:[4] O-Matsu (Pine), O-Také (Bamboo), O-Umé (Plum), O-Hana (Blossom), O-Iné (Ear-of-Young-Rice), not to speak of the professional flower-names of dancing-girls and of jorō. It has been argued with considerable force that the origin of certain tree-names borne by girls must be sought in the folk-conception of the tree as an emblem of longevity, or happiness, or good fortune, rather than in any popular idea of the beauty of the tree in itself. But however this may be, proverb, poem, song, and popular speech to-day yield ample proof that the Japanese comparisons of women to trees and flowers are in no-wise inferior to our own in æsthetic sentiment.

[1] *Peonia albiflora.* The name signifies the delicacy of beauty. The simile of the *botan* (the tree peony) can be fully appreciated only by one who is acquainted with the Japanese flower.

[2] Some say keshiyuri (poppy) instead of himeyuri. The latter is a graceful species of lily, *Lilium callosum.*

[3] 'Standing, she is a shakuyaku; seated, she is a botan; and the charm of her figure in walking is the charm of a himeyuri.'

[4] In the higher classes of Japanese society to-day, the honorific *O* is not, as a rule, used before the names of girls, and showy appellations are not given to daughters. Even among the poor respectable classes, names resembling those of geisha, etc., are in disfavour. But those above cited are good, honest, everyday names.

§ 6

That trees, at least Japanese trees, have souls, cannot seem an unnatural fancy to one who has seen the blossoming of the umenoki and the sakuranoki. This is a popular belief in Izumo and elsewhere. It is not in accord with Buddhist philosophy, and yet in a certain sense it strikes one as being much closer to cosmic truth than the old Western orthodox notion of trees as 'things created for the use of man.' Furthermore, there exist several odd superstitions about particular trees, not unlike certain West Indian beliefs which have had a good influence in checking the destruction of valuable timber. Japan, like the tropical world, has its goblin trees. Of these, the enoki (*Celtis Willdenowiana*) and the yanagi (drooping willow) are deemed especially ghostly, and are rarely now to be found in old Japanese gardens. Both are believed to have the power of haunting. '*Enoki ga bakeru*,' the Izumo saying is. You will find in a Japanese dictionary the word 'bakeru' translated by such terms as 'to be transformed,' 'to be metamorphosed,' 'to be changed,' etc.; but the belief about these trees is very singular, and cannot be explained by any such rendering of the verb 'bakeru.' The tree itself does not change form or place, but a spectre called Ki-no o-baké disengages itself from the tree and walks about in various guises.[1] Most often the shape assumed by the

[1] Mr. Satow has found in Hirata a belief to which this seems to some extent akin, – the curious Shintō doctrine 'according to which a divine being throws off portions of itself by a process of fissure, thus producing what are called waki-mi-tama, – parted spirits, with separate functions.' The great god of Izumo, Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami, is said by Hirata to have three such 'parted spirits': his rough spirit (*ara-mi-tama*) that punishes, his gentle spirit (*nigi-mi-tama*) that pardons, and his benedictory or beneficent spirit (*saki-mi-tama*) that blesses. There is a Shintō story that the rough spirit of this god once met the gentle spirit without recognizing it.

phantom is that of a beautiful woman. The tree spectre seldom speaks, and seldom ventures to go very far away from its tree. If approached, it immediately shrinks back into the trunk or the foliage. It is said that if either an old yanagi or a young enoki be cut blood will flow from the gash. When such trees are very young it is not believed that they have supernatural habits, but they become more dangerous the older they grow.

There is a rather pretty legend – recalling the old Greek dream of dryads – about a willow-tree which grew in the garden of a samurai of Kyōto. Owing to its weird reputation, the tenant of the homestead desired to cut it down; but another samurai dissuaded him, saying: 'Rather sell it to me, that I may plant it in my garden. That tree has a soul; it were cruel to destroy its life.' Thus purchased and transplanted, the yanagi flourished well in its new home, and its spirit, out of gratitude, took the form of a beautiful woman, and became the wife of the samurai who had befriended it. A charming boy was the result of this union. A few years later, the daimyō to whom the ground belonged gave orders that the tree should be cut down. Then the wife wept bitterly, and for the first time revealed to her husband the whole story. 'And now,' she added, 'I know that I must die; but our child will live, and you will always love him. This thought is my only solace.' Vainly the astonished and terrified husband sought to retain her. Bidding him farewell for ever, she vanished into the tree. Needless to say that the samurai did everything in his power to persuade the daimyō to forgo his purpose. The prince wanted the tree for the reparation of a great Buddhist temple, the San-jiu-san-gen-dō.[1] The tree was felled, but, having fallen, it suddenly became so heavy that three hundred men could not move it. Then the

[1] Perhaps the most impressive of all the Buddhist temples in Kyōto. It is dedicated to Kwannon of the Thousand Hands, and is said to contain 33,333 of her images.

child, taking a branch in his little hand, said, 'Come,' and the tree followed him, gliding along the ground to the court of the temple.

Although said to be a bakemono-ki, the enoki sometimes receives highest religious honours; for the spirit of the god Kōjin, to whom old dolls are dedicated, is supposed to dwell within certain very ancient enoki trees, and before these are placed shrines whereat people make prayers.

§ 7

The second garden, on the north side, is my favourite. It contains no large growths. It is paved with blue pebbles, and its centre is occupied by a pondlet, – a miniature lake fringed with rare plants, and containing a tiny island, with tiny mountains and dwarf peach-trees and pines and azaleas, some of which are perhaps more than a century old, though scarcely more than a foot high. Nevertheless, this work, seen as it was intended to be seen, does not appear to the eye in miniature at all. From a certain angle of the guest-room looking out upon it, the appearance is that of a real lake shore with a real island beyond it, a stone's throw away. So cunning the art of the ancient gardener who contrived all this, and who has been sleeping for a hundred years under the cedars of Gesshoji, that the illusion can be detected only from the zashiki by the presence of an ishidōrō, or stone lamp, upon the island. The size of the ishidōrō betrays the false perspective, and I do not think it was placed there when the garden was made.

Here and there at the edge of the pond, and almost level with the water, are placed large flat stones, on which one may either stand or squat, to watch the lacustrine population or to tend the water-plants. There are beautiful water-lilies, whose bright green leaf-disks float oilily upon the surface (*Nuphar Japonica*), and many lotus plants of two kinds, those which

bear pink and those which bear pure white flowers. There are iris plants growing along the bank, whose blossoms are prismatic violet, and there are various ornamental grasses and ferns and mosses. But the pond is essentially a lotus pond; the lotus plants make its greatest charm. It is a delight to watch every phase of their marvellous growth, from the first unrolling of the leaf to the fall of the last flower. On rainy days, especially, the lotus plants are worth observing. Their great cup-shaped leaves, swaying high above the pond, catch the rain and hold it a while; but always after the water in the leaf reaches a certain level the stem bends, and empties the leaf with a loud plash, and then straightens again. Rain-water upon a lotus-leaf is a favourite subject with Japanese metal-workers, and metal-work only can reproduce the effect, for the motion and colour of water moving upon the green oleaginous surface are exactly those of quicksilver.

§ 8

The third garden, which is very large, extends beyond the inclosure containing the lotus pond to the foot of the wooded hills which form the northern and north-eastern boundary of this old samurai quarter. Formerly all this broad level space was occupied by a bamboo grove; but it is now little more than a waste of grasses and wild flowers. In the north-east corner there is a magnificent well, from which ice-cold water is brought into the house through a most ingenious little aqueduct of bamboo pipes; and in the north-western end, veiled by tall weeds, there stands a very small stone shrine of Inari, with two proportionately small stone foxes sitting before it. Shrine and images are chipped and broken, and thickly patched with dark green moss. But on the east side of the house one little square of soil belonging to this large division of the garden is still cultivated. It is devoted entirely to chrysanthemum

plants, which are shielded from heavy rain and strong sun by slanting frames of light wood fashioned, like shōji, with panes of white paper, and supported like awnings upon thin posts of bamboo. I can venture to add nothing to what has already been written about these marvellous products of Japanese floriculture considered in themselves; but there is a little story relating to chrysanthemums which I may presume to tell.

There is one place in Japan where it is thought unlucky to cultivate chrysanthemums, for reasons which shall presently appear; and that place is in the pretty little city of Himeji, in the province of Harima. Himeji contains the ruins of a great castle of thirty turrets; and a daimyō used to dwell therein whose revenue was one hundred and fifty-six thousand koku of rice. Now, in the house of one of that daimyō's chief retainers there was a maid-servant, of good family, whose name was O-Kiku; and the name 'Kiku' signifies a chrysanthemum flower. Many precious things were intrusted to her charge, and among others ten costly dishes of gold. One of these was suddenly missed, and could not be found; and the girl, being responsible therefor, and knowing not how otherwise to prove her innocence, drowned herself in a well. But ever thereafter her ghost, returning nightly, could be heard counting the dishes slowly, with sobs:

Ichi-mai, *Yo-mai*, *Shichi-mai*,
Ni-mai, *Go-mai*, *Hachi-mai*,
San-mai, *Roku-mai*, *Ku-mai* –

Then would be heard a despairing cry and a loud burst of weeping; and again the girl's voice counting the dishes plaintively: 'One – two – three – four – five – six – seven – eight – *nine* –'

Her spirit passed into the body of a strange little insect, whose head faintly resembles that of a ghost with long dis-

hevelled hair; and it is called O-Kiku-mushi, or 'the fly of O-Kiku'; and it is found, they say, nowhere save in Himeji. A famous play was written about O-Kiku, which is still acted in all the popular theatres, entitled *Banshu-O-Kiku-no-Sara-ya-shiki; or, The Manor of the Dish of O-Kiku of Banshu.*

Some declare that Banshu is only the corruption of the name of an ancient quarter of Tōkyō (Yedo), where the story should have been laid. But the people of Himeji say that part of their city now called Go-Ken-Yashiki is identical with the site of the ancient manor. What is certainly true is that to cultivate chrysanthemum flowers in the part of Himeji called Go-Ken-Yashiki is deemed unlucky, because the name of O-Kiku signifies 'Chrysanthemum.' Therefore, nobody, I am told, ever cultivates chrysanthemums there.

§ 9

Now of the ujō, or things having desire, which inhabit these gardens.

There are four species of frogs: three that dwell in the lotus pond, and one that lives in the trees. The tree frog is a very pretty little creature, exquisitely green; it has a shrill cry, almost like the note of a *semi*; and it is called amagaeru, or 'the rain frog,' because, like its kindred in other countries, its croaking is an omen of rain. The pond frogs are called baba-gaeru, shinagaeru, and Tono-san-gaeru. Of these, the first-named variety is the largest and the ugliest: its colour is very disagreeable, and its full name ('babagaeru' being a decent abbreviation) is quite as offensive as its hue. The shinagaeru, or 'striped frog,' is not handsome, except by comparison with the previously mentioned creature. But the Tono-san-gaeru, so called after a famed daimyō who left behind him a memory of great splendour, is beautiful: its colour is a fine bronze-red.

Besides these varieties of frogs there lives in the garden a huge uncouth goggle-eyed thing which, although called here hikigaeru, I take to be a toad. 'Hikigaeru' is the term ordinarily used for a bullfrog. This creature enters the house almost daily to be fed, and seems to have no fear even of strangers. My people consider it a luck-bringing visitor; and it is credited with the power of drawing all the mosquitoes out of a room into its mouth by simply sucking its breath in. Much as it is cherished by gardeners and others, there is a legend about a goblin toad of old times, which, by thus sucking in its breath, drew into its mouth, not insects, but men.

The pond is inhabited also by many small fish; imori, or newts, with bright red bellies; and multitudes of little water-beetles, called maimaimushi, which pass their whole time in gyrating upon the surface of the water so rapidly that it is almost impossible to distinguish their shape clearly. A man who runs about aimlessly to and fro, under the influence of excitement, is compared to a maimaimushi. And there are some beautiful snails, with yellow stripes on their shells. Japanese children have a charm-song which is supposed to have power to make the snail put out its horns:

Daidaimushi,[1] *daidaimushi*, *tsuno chitto dashare!*
Ame kaze fuku kara tsuno chitto dashare![2]

The playground of the children of the better classes has always been the family garden, as that of the children of the poor is the temple court. It is in the garden that the little

[1] *Daidaimushi* in Izumo. The dictionary word is *dedemushi*. The snail is supposed to be very fond of wet weather; and one who goes out much in the rain is compared to a snail, – *dedemushi no yona*.

[2] 'Snail, snail, put out your horns a little: it rains and the wind is blowing, so put out your horns, just for a little while.'

ones first learn something of the wonderful life of plants and the marvels of the insect world; and there, also, they are first taught those pretty legends and songs about birds and flowers which form so charming a part of Japanese folk-lore. As the home training of the child is left mostly to the mother, lessons of kindness to animals are early inculcated; and the results are strongly marked in after life. It is true, Japanese children are not entirely free from that unconscious tendency to cruelty characteristic of children in all countries, as a survival of primitive instincts. But in this regard the great moral difference between the sexes is strongly marked from the earliest years. The tenderness of the woman-soul appears even in the child. Little Japanese girls who play with insects or small animals rarely hurt them, and generally set them free after they have afforded a reasonable amount of amusement. Little boys are not nearly so good, when out of sight of parents or guardians. But if seen doing anything cruel, a child is made to feel ashamed of the act, and hears the Buddhist warning, 'Thy future birth will be unhappy, if thou dost cruel things.'

Somewhere among the rocks in the pond lives a small tortoise, – left in the garden, probably, by the previous tenants of the house. It is very pretty, but manages to remain invisible for weeks at a time. In popular mythology, the tortoise is the servant of the divinity Kompira;[1] and if a pious fisherman finds a tortoise, he writes upon his back characters signifying 'Servant of the Deity Kompira,' and then gives it a drink of sake and sets it free. It is supposed to be very fond of sake.

Some say that the land tortoise, or 'stone tortoise,' only, is the servant of Kompira, and the sea tortoise, or turtle, the

[1] A Buddhist divinity, but within recent times identified by Shintō with the god Kotohira.

servant of the Dragon Empire beneath the sea. The turtle is said to have the power to create, with its breath, a cloud, a fog, or a magnificent palace. It figures in the beautiful old folk-tale of Urashima.[1] All tortoises are supposed to live for a thousand years, wherefore one of the most frequent symbols of longevity in Japanese art is a tortoise. But the tortoise most commonly represented by native painters and metal-workers has a peculiar tail, or rather a multitude of small tails, extending behind it like the fringes of a straw rain-coat, mino, whence it is called minogamé. Now, some of the tortoises kept in the sacred tanks of Buddhist temples attain a prodigious age, and certain water-plants attach themselves to the creatures' shells and stream behind them when they walk. The myth of the minogamé is supposed to have had its origin in old artistic efforts to represent the appearance of such tortoises with confervæ fastened upon their shells.

§ 10

Early in summer the frogs are surprisingly numerous, and, after dark, are noisy beyond description; but week by week their nightly clamour grows feebler, as their numbers diminish under the attacks of many enemies. A large family of snakes, some fully three feet long, make occasional inroads into the colony. The victims often utter piteous cries, which are promptly responded to, whenever possible, by some inmate of the house, and many a frog has been saved by my servant-girl, who, by a gentle tap with a bamboo rod, compels the snake to let its prey go. These snakes are beautiful swimmers. They make themselves quite free about the garden; but they come out only on hot days. None of my people would think of injuring or killing one of them. Indeed, in Izumo it is said that

[1] See Professor Chamberlain's version of it in The Japanese Fairy Tale Series, with charming illustrations by a native artist.

to kill a snake is unlucky. 'If you kill a snake without provocation,' a peasant assured me, 'you will afterwards find its head in the komebitsu [the box in which cooked rice is kept] when you take off the lid.'

But the snakes devour comparatively few frogs. Impudent kites and crows are their most implacable destroyers; and there is a very pretty weasel which lives under the kura (godown) and which does not hesitate to take either fish or frogs out of the pond, even when the lord of the manor is watching. There is also a cat which poaches in my preserves, a gaunt outlaw, a master thief, which I have made sundry vain attempts to reclaim from vagabondage. Partly because of the immorality of this cat, and partly because it happens to have a long tail, it has the evil reputation of being a nekomata, or goblin cat.

It is true that in Izumo some kittens are born with long tails; but it is very seldom that they are suffered to grow up with long tails. For the natural tendency of cats is to become goblins; and this tendency to metamorphosis can be checked only by cutting off their tails in kittenhood. Cats are magicians, tails or no tails, and have the power of making corpses dance. Cats are ungrateful. 'Feed a dog for three days,' says a Japanese proverb, 'and he will remember your kindness for three years; feed a cat for three years and she will forget your kindness in three days.' Cats are mischievous: they tear the mattings, and make holes in the shōji, and sharpen their claws upon the pillars of tokonoma. Cats are under a curse: only the cat and the venomous serpent wept not at the death of Buddha; and these shall never enter into the bliss of the Gokuraku. For all these reasons, and others too numerous to relate, cats are not much loved in Izumo, and are compelled to pass the greater part of their lives out of doors.

§ II

Not less than eleven varieties of butterflies have visited the neighbourhood of the lotus pond within the past few days. The most common variety is snowy white. It is supposed to be especially attracted by the na, or rape-seed plant; and when little girls see it, they sing:

Chō-chō, chō-chō, na no ha ni tomare;
Na no ha ga iyenara, te ni tomare.[1]

But the most interesting insects are certainly the semi (cicadæ). These Japanese tree crickets are much more extraordinary singers than even the wonderful cicadæ of the tropics; and they are much less tiresome, for there is a different species of semi, with a totally different song, for almost every month during the whole warm season. There are, I believe, seven kinds; but I have become familiar with only four. The first to be heard in my trees is the natsuzemi, or summer semi: it makes a sound like the Japanese monosyllable *ji*, beginning wheezily, slowly swelling into a crescendo shrill as the blowing of steam, and dying away in another wheeze. This *j-i-i-iiiiiiiii* is so deafening that when two or three natsuzemi come close to the window I am obliged to make them go away. Happily the natsuzemi is soon succeeded by the minminzemi, a much finer musician, whose name is derived from its wonderful note. It is said 'to chant like a Buddhist priest reciting the kyō'; and certainly, upon hearing it the first time, one can scarcely believe that one is listening to a mere cicada. The minminzemi is followed, early in autumn, by a beautiful green semi, the higurashi, which makes a singularly clear sound, like

[1] 'Butterfly, little butterfly, light upon the *na* leaf. But if thou dost not like the *na* leaf, light, I pray thee, upon my hand.'

the rapid ringing of a small bell, – *kana-kana-kana-kana-kana.* But the most astonishing visitor of all comes still later, the tsukiu-tsukiu-bōshi.[1] I fancy this creature can have no rival in the whole world of cicadæ: its music is exactly like the song of a bird. Its name, like that of the minminzemi, is onomatopoetic; but in Izumo the sounds of its chant are given thus:

Tsuku-tsuku uisu,[2]
Tsuku-tsuku uisu,
Tsuku-tsuku uisu; –
Ui-ōsu,
Ui-ōsu,
Ui-ōsu,
Ui-ōs-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-su.

However, the semi are not the only musicians of the garden. Two remarkable creatures aid their orchestra. The first is a beautiful bright green grasshopper, known to the Japanese by the curious name of hotoke-no-uma, or 'the horse of the dead.' This insect's head really bears some resemblance in shape to the head of a horse, – hence the fancy. It is a queerly familiar creature, allowing itself to be taken in the hand without struggling, and generally making itself quite at home in the house, which it often enters. It makes a very thin sound, which the Japanese write as a repetition of the syllables *jun-ta*; and the name junta is sometimes given to the grasshopper itself. The other insect is also a green grasshopper, somewhat larger, and much shyer: it is called gisu,[3] on account of its chant:

[1] *Bōshi* means 'a hat'; *tsukeru,* 'to put on.' But this etymology is more than doubtful.

[2] Some say '*Chokko-chokko-uisu.*' 'Uisu' would be pronounced in English very much like 'weece,' the final *u* being silent. 'Uiōsu' would be something like 'we-oce.'

[3] Pronounced almost as 'geece.'

Chon,
Gisu;
Chon,
Gisu;
Chon,
Gisu;
Chon . . . (ad libitum).

Several lovely species of dragon-flies (*tombō*) hover about the pondlet on hot bright days. One variety – the most beautiful creature of the kind I ever saw, gleaming with metallic colours indescribable, and spectrally slender – is called Tenshi-tombō, 'the Emperor's dragon-fly.' There is another, the largest of Japanese dragon-flies, but somewhat rare, which is much sought after by children as a plaything. Of this species it is said that there are many more males than females; and what I can vouch for as true is that, if you catch a female, the male can be almost immediately attracted by exposing the captive. Boys, accordingly, try to secure a female, and when one is captured they tie it with a thread to some branch, and sing a curious little song, of which these are the original words:

Konna[1] *danshō Korai ō*
Adzuma no metō ni makete
Nigeru wa haji dewa naikai?

Which signifies, 'Thou, the male, King of Korea, dost thou not feel shame to flee away from the Queen of the East?' (This taunt is an allusion to the story of the conquest of Korea by the Empress Jin-gō.) And the male comes invariably, and is also caught. In Izumo the first seven words of the original song have been corrupted into '*konna unjo Korai abura no mito*'; and

[1] Contraction of *kore naru.*

the name of the male dragon-fly, *unjo*, and that of the female, *mito*, are derived from two words of the corrupted version.

§ 12

Of warm nights all sorts of unbidden guests invade the house in multitudes. Two varieties of mosquitoes do their utmost to make life unpleasant, and these have learned the wisdom of not approaching a lamp too closely; but hosts of curious and harmless things cannot be prevented from seeking their death in the flame. The most numerous victims of all, which come thick as a shower of rain, are called Sanemori. At least they are so called in Izumo, where they do much damage to growing rice.

Now the name Sanemori is an illustrious one, that of a famous warrior of old times belonging to the Genji clan. There is a legend that while he was fighting with an enemy on horseback his own steed slipped and fell in a rice-field, and he was consequently overpowered and slain by his antagonist. He became a rice-devouring insect, which is still respectfully called, by the peasantry of Izumo, Sanemori-San. They light fires, on certain summer nights, in the rice-fields, to attract the insect, and beat gongs and sound bamboo flutes, chanting the while, 'O Sanemori, augustly deign to come hither!' A kannushi performs a religious rite, and a straw figure representing a horse and rider is then either burned or thrown into a neighbouring river or canal. By this ceremony it is believed that the fields are cleared of the insect.

This tiny creature is almost exactly the size and colour of a rice-husk. The legend concerning it may have arisen from the fact that its body, together with the wings, bears some resemblance to the helmet of a Japanese warrior.[1]

[1] A kindred legend attaches to the shiwan, a little yellow insect which preys upon cucumbers. The shiwan is said to have been once

Next in number among the victims of fire are the moths, some of which are very strange and beautiful. The most remarkable is an enormous creature popularly called okori-chōchō, or the 'ague moth,' because there is a superstitious belief that it brings intermittent fever into any house it enters. It has a body quite as heavy and almost as powerful as that of the largest humming-bird, and its struggles, when caught in the hand, surprise by their force. It makes a very loud whirring sound while flying. The wings of one which I examined measured, outspread, five inches from tip to tip, yet seemed small in proportion to the heavy body. They were richly mottled with dusky browns and silver greys of various tones.

Many flying night-comers, however, avoid the lamp. Most fantastic of all visitors is the tōrō or kamakiri, called in Izumo kamakaké, a bright green praying mantis, extremely feared by children for its capacity to bite. It is very large. I have seen specimens over six inches long. The eyes of the kamakaké are a brilliant black at night, but by day they appear grass-

a physician, who, being detected in an amorous intrigue, had to fly for his life; but as he went his foot caught in a cucumber vine, so that he fell and was overtaken and killed, and his ghost became an insect, the destroyer of cucumber vines.

In the zoological mythology and plant mythology of Japan there exist many legends offering a curious resemblance to the old Greek tales of metamorphoses. Some of the most remarkable bits of such folk-lore have originated, however, in comparatively modern time. The legend of the crab called heikegani, found at Nagato, is an example. The souls of the Taira warriors who perished in the great naval battle of Dan-no-ura (now Seto-Nakai), 1185, are supposed to have been transformed into heikegani. The shell of the heikegani is certainly surprising. It is wrinkled into the likeness of a grim face, or rather into exact semblance of one of those black iron visors, or masks, which feudal warriors wore in battle, and which were shaped like frowning visages.

coloured, like the rest of the body. The mantis is very intelligent and surprisingly aggressive. I saw one attacked by a vigorous frog easily put its enemy to flight. It fell a prey subsequently to other inhabitants of the pond, but it required the combined efforts of several frogs to vanquish the monstrous insect, and even then the battle was decided only when the kamakaké had been dragged into the water.

Other visitors are beetles of divers colours, and a sort of small roach called goki-kaburi, signifying 'one whose head is covered with a bowl.' It is alleged that the goki-kaburi likes to eat human eyes, and is therefore the abhorred enemy of Ichibata-Sama, – Yakushi-Nyorai of Ichibata, – by whom diseases of the eye are healed. To kill the goki-kaburi is consequently thought to be a meritorious act in the sight of this Buddha. Always welcome are the beautiful fireflies (*hotaru*), which enter quite noiselessly and at once seek the darkest place in the house, slow-glimmering, like sparks moved by a gentle wind. They are supposed to be very fond of water; wherefore children sing to them this little song:

Hotaru kōe midzu nomashō;
Achi no midzu wa nigaizo;
Kochi no midzu wa amaizo.[1]

A pretty grey lizard, quite different from some which usually haunt the garden, also makes its appearance at night, and pursues its prey along the ceiling. Sometimes an extraordinarily large centipede attempts the same thing, but with less success, and has to be seized with a pair of fire-tongs and thrown into the exterior darkness. Very rarely, an enormous spider appears. This creature seems inoffensive. If captured,

[1] 'Come, firefly, I will give you water to drink. The water of that place is bitter; the water here is sweet.'

it will feign death until certain that it is not watched, when it will run away with surprising swiftness if it gets a chance. It is hairless, and very different from the tarantula, or fukurogumo. It is called miyamagumo, or mountain spider. There are four other kinds of spiders common in this neighbourhood: tenagakumo, or 'long-armed spider;' hiratakumo, or 'flat spider'; jikumo, or 'earth spider'; and totatekumo, or 'door-shutting spider.' Most spiders are considered evil beings. A spider seen anywhere at night, the people say, should be killed; for all spiders that show themselves after dark are goblins. While people are awake and watchful, such creatures make themselves small; but when everybody is fast asleep, then they assume their true goblin shape, and become monstrous.

§ 13

The high wood of the hill behind the garden is full of bird life. There dwell wild uguisu, owls, wild doves, too many crows, and a queer bird that makes weird noises at night, – long deep sounds of *hoo*, *hoo*. It is called awamakidori or the 'millet-sowing bird,' because when the farmers hear its cry they know that it is time to plant the millet. It is quite small and brown, extremely shy, and, so far as I can learn, altogether nocturnal in its habits.

But rarely, very rarely, a far stranger cry is heard in those trees at night, a voice as of one crying in pain the syllables '*ho-to-to-gi-su.*' The cry and the name of that which utters it are one and the same, *hototogisu*.

It is a bird of which weird things are told; for they say it is not really a creature of this living world, but a night wanderer from the Land of Darkness. In the Meido its dwelling is among those sunless mountains of Shide over which all souls must pass to reach the place of judgment. Once in each year it

comes; the time of its coming is the end of the fifth month, by the antique counting of moons; and the peasants, hearing its voice, say one to the other, 'Now must we sow the rice; for the Shide-no-taosa is with us.' The word taosa signifies the head man of a mura, or village, as villages were governed in the old days; but why the hototogisu is called the taosa of Shide I do not know. Perhaps it is deemed to be a soul from some shadowy hamlet of the Shide hills, whereat the ghosts are wont to rest on their weary way to the realm of Emma, the King of Death.

Its cry has been interpreted in various ways. Some declare that the hototogisu does not really repeat its own name, but asks, '*Honzon kaketaka?*' (Has the honzon[1] been suspended?) Others, resting their interpretation upon the wisdom of the Chinese, aver that the bird's speech signifies, 'Surely it is better to return home.' This, at least is true: that all who journey far from their native place, and hear the voice of the hototogisu in other distant provinces, are seized with the sickness of longing for home.

Only at night, the people say, is its voice heard, and most often upon the nights of great moons; and it chants while hovering high out of sight, wherefore a poet has sung of it thus:

Hito koe wa.
Tsuki ga naitaka
Hototogisu![2]

[1] By *honzon* is here meant the sacred kakemono, or picture, exposed to public view in the temples only upon the birthday of the Buddha, which is the eighth day of the old fourth month. *Honzon* also signifies the principal image in a Buddhist temple.

[2] 'A solitary voice!
Did the Moon cry?
'Twas but the hototogisu.

And another has written:

Hototogisu
Nakitsuru kata wo
Nagamureba,–
Tada ariake no
Tsuki zo nokoreru.[1]

The dweller in cities may pass a lifetime without hearing the hototogisu. Caged, the little creature will remain silent and die. Poets often wait vainly in the dew, from sunset till dawn, to hear the strange cry which has inspired so many exquisite verses. But those who have heard found it so mournful that they have likened it to the cry of one wounded suddenly to death.

Hototogisu
Chi ni naku koe wa
Ariake no
Tsuki yori hokani
Kiku hito mo nashi.[2]

Concerning Izumo owls, I shall content myself with citing a composition by one of my Japanese students:

'The Owl is a hateful bird that sees in the dark. Little children who cry are frightened by the threat that the Owl will come to take them away; for the Owl cries, "*Ho! ho! sorōtto kōka! sorōtto kōka!*" which means, "Thou! must I enter slowly?" It also cries "*Noritsuke hose! ho! ho!*" which means, "Do thou make the starch to use in washing to-morrow!"

[1] 'When I gaze towards the place where I heard the hototogisu cry, lo! there is naught save the wan morning moon.'

[2] 'Save only the morning moon, none heard the heart's-blood cry of the hototogisu.'

And when the women hear that cry, they know that to-morrow will be a fine day. It also cries, "*Tototo*," "The man dies," and "*Kōtokokko*," "The boy dies." So people hate it. And crows hate it so much that it is used to catch crows. The Farmer puts an Owl in the rice-field; and all the crows come to kill it, and they get caught fast in the snares. This should teach us not to give way to our dislikes for other people.'

The kites which hover over the city all day do not live in the neighbourhood. Their nests are far away upon the blue peaks; but they pass much of their time in catching fish, and in stealing from back-yards. They pay the wood and the garden swift and sudden piratical visits; and their sinister cry – *pi-yorōyorō*, *pi-yorōyorō* – sounds at intervals over the town from dawn till sundown. Most insolent of all feathered creatures they certainly are, – more insolent than even their fellow-robbers, the crows. A kite will drop five miles to filch a tai out of a fish-seller's bucket, or a fried-cake out of a child's hand, and shoot back to the clouds before the victim of the theft has time to stoop for a stone. Hence the saying, 'to look as surprised as if one's aburagé[1] had been snatched from one's hand by a kite.' There is, moreover, no telling what a kite may think proper to steal. For example, my neighbour's servant-girl went to the river the other day, wearing in her hair a string of small scarlet beads made of rice-grains prepared and dyed in a certain ingenious way. A kite lighted upon her head, and tore away and swallowed the string of beads. But it is great fun to feed these birds with dead rats or mice which have been caught in traps overnight and subsequently drowned. The instant a dead rat is exposed to view a kite pounces from the sky to bear it away. Sometimes a crow may get the start of the kite, but the crow must be able to get to the woods very swiftly

[1] A sort of doughnut made of bean flour, or tofu.

indeed in order to keep his prize. The children sing this song:

Tobi, tobi, maute mise!
Ashita no ba ni
Karasu ni kakushite
Nezumi yaru.[1]

The mention of dancing refers to the beautiful balancing motion of the kite's wings in flight. By suggestion this motion is poetically compared to the graceful swaying of a maiko, or dancing-girl, extending her arms and waving the long wide sleeves of her silken robe.

Although there is a numerous sub-colony of crows in the wood behind my house, the headquarters of the corvine army are in the pine grove of the ancient castle grounds, visible from my front rooms. To see the crows all flying home at the same hour every evening is an interesting spectacle, and popular imagination has found an amusing comparison for it in the hurry-skurry of people running to a fire. This explains the meaning of a song which children sing to the crows returning to their nests:

Ato no karasu saki ine,
Ware ga iye ga yakeru ken,
Hayō inde midzu kake,
Midzu ga nakya yarozo,
Amattara ko ni yare,
Ko ga nakya modose.[2]

[1] 'Kite, kite, let me see you dance, and to-morrow evening, when the crows do not know, I will give you a rat.'

[2] 'O tardy crow, hasten forward! Your house is all on fire. Hurry to throw water upon it. If there be no water, I will give you. If you have too much, give it to your child. If you have no child, then give it back to me.'

Confucianism seems to have discovered virtue in the crow. There is a Japanese proverb, '*Karasu ni hampo no ko ari*,' meaning that the crow performs the filial duty of hampo, or, more literally, 'the filial duty of hampo exists in the crow.' 'Hampo' means, literally, 'to return a feeding.' The young crow is said to requite its parents' care by feeding them when it becomes strong. Another example of filial piety has been furnished by the dove. '*Hato ni sanshi no rei ari*,' – the dove sits three branches below its parent; or, more literally, 'has the three-branch etiquette to perform.'

The cry of the wild dove (*yamabato*), which I hear almost daily from the wood, is the most sweetly plaintive sound that ever reached my ears. The Izumo peasantry say that the bird utters these words, which it certainly seems to do if one listen to it after having learned the alleged syllables:

Tété
poppō,
Kaka
poppō,
Tété
poppō,
Kaka
poppō,
Tété . . . (sudden pause).

'Tété' is the baby word for 'father,' and 'kaka' for 'mother'; and 'poppō' signifies, in infantile speech, 'the bosom.'[1]

[1] The words *papa* and *mamma* exist in Japanese baby language, but their meaning is not at all what might be supposed. *Mamma*, or, with the usual honorific, *O-mamma*, means 'boiled rice.' *Papa* means 'tobacco.'

Wild uguisu also frequently sweeten my summer with their song, and sometimes come very near the house, being attracted, apparently, by the chant of my caged pet. The uguisu is very common in this province. It haunts all the woods and the sacred groves in the neighbourhood of the city, and I never made a journey in Izumo during the warm season without hearing its note from some shadowy place. But there are uguisu and uguisu. There are uguisu to be had for one or two yen, but the finely trained, cage-bred singer may command not less than a hundred.

It was at a little village temple that I first heard one curious belief about this delicate creature. In Japan, the coffin in which a corpse is borne to burial is totally unlike an Occidental coffin. It is a surprisingly small square box, wherein the dead is placed in a sitting posture. How any adult corpse can be put into so small a space may well be an enigma to foreigners. In cases of pronounced *rigor mortis* the work of getting the body into the coffin is difficult even for the professional dōshin-bozu. But the devout followers of Nichiren claim that after death their bodies will remain perfectly flexible; and the dead body of an uguisu, they affirm, likewise never stiffens, for this little bird is of their faith, and passes its life in singing praises unto the Sutra of the Lotus of the Good Law.

§ 14

I have already become a little too fond of my dwelling-place. Each day, after returning from my college duties, and exchanging my teacher's uniform for the infinitely more comfortable Japanese robe, I find more than compensation for the weariness of five class-hours in the simple pleasure of squatting on the shaded veranda overlooking the gardens. Those antique garden walls, high-mossed below their ruined coping of tiles,

seem to shut out even the murmur of the city's life. There are no sounds but the voices of birds, the shrilling of semi, or, at long, lazy intervals, the solitary plash of a diving frog. Nay, those walls seclude me from much more than city streets. Outside them hums the changed Japan of telegraphs and newspapers and steamships; within dwell the all-reposing peace of nature and the dreams of the sixteenth century. There is a charm of quaintness in the very air, a faint sense of something viewless and sweet all about one; perhaps the gentle haunting of dead ladies who looked like the ladies of the old picture-books, and who lived here when all this was new. Even in the summer light – touching the grey strange shapes of stone, thrilling through the foliage of the long-loved trees – there is the tenderness of a phantom caress. These are the gardens of the past. The future will know them only as dreams, creations of a forgotten art, whose charm no genius may reproduce.

Of the human tenants here no creature seems to be afraid. The little frogs resting upon the lotus-leaves scarcely shrink from my touch; the lizards sun themselves within easy reach of my hand; the water-snakes glide across my shadow without fear; bands of semi establish their deafening orchestra on a plum branch just above my head, and a praying mantis insolently poses on my knee. Swallows and sparrows not only build their nests on my roof, but even enter my rooms without concern, – one swallow has actually built its nest in the ceiling of the bathroom, – and the weasel purloins fish under my very eyes without any scruples of conscience. A wild uguisu perches on a cedar by the window, and in a burst of savage sweetness challenges my caged pet to a contest in song; and always though the golden air, from the green twilight of the mountain pines, there purls to me the plaintive, caressing, delicious call of the yamabato:

Tété
poppō,
Kaka
poppō,
Tété
poppō,
Kaka
poppō,
Tété . . .

No European dove has such a cry. He who can hear, for the first time, the voice of the yamabato without feeling a new sensation at his heart little deserves to dwell in this happy world.

Yet all this – the old katchiū-yashiki and its gardens – will doubtless have vanished for ever before many years. Already a multitude of gardens, more spacious and more beautiful than mine, have been converted into rice-fields or bamboo groves; and the quaint Izumo city, touched at last by some long-projected railway line, – perhaps even within the present decade, – will swell, and change, and grow commonplace, and demand these grounds for the building of factories and mills. Not from here alone, but from all the land the ancient peace and the ancient charm seem doomed to pass away. For impermanency is the nature of things, more particularly in Japan; and the changes and the changers shall also be changed until there is found no place for them, – and regret is vanity. The dead art that made the beauty of this place was the art, also, of that faith to which belongs the all-consoling text, '*Verily, even plants and trees, rocks and stones, all shall enter into Nirvana.*'

CHAPTER TWO

The Household Shrine

*

§ 1

In Japan there are two forms of the Religion of the Dead, – that which belongs to Shintō, and that which belongs to Buddhism. The first is the primitive cult, commonly called ancestor-worship. But the term ancestor-worship seems to me much too confined for the religion which pays reverence not only to those ancient gods believed to be the fathers of the Japanese race, but likewise to a host of deified sovereigns, heroes, princes, and illustrious men. Within comparatively recent times, the great Daimyō of Izumo, for example, were apotheosized; and the peasants of Shimane still pray before the shrines of the Matsudaira. Moreover Shintō, like the faiths of Hellas and of Rome, has its deities of the elements and special deities who preside over all the various affairs of life. Therefore ancestor-worship, though still a striking feature of Shintō, does not alone constitute the State Religion: neither does the term fully describe the Shintō cult of the dead, – a cult which in Izumo retains its primitive character more than in other parts of Japan.

And here I may presume, though no sinologue, to say something about that State Religion of Japan, – that ancient faith of Izumo, – which, although even more deeply rooted in national life than Buddhism, is far less known to the Western world. Except in special works by such men of erudition as Chamberlain and Satow, – works with which the Occidental reader, unless himself a specialist, is not likely to become familiar outside of Japan, – little has been written in English about Shintō which gives the least idea of what Shintō is. Of its ancient traditions and rites much of rarest interest may be

learned from the works of the philologists just mentioned; but, as Mr. Satow himself acknowledges, a definite answer to the question, 'What is the nature of Shintō?' is still difficult to give. How define the common element in the six kinds of Shintō which are known to exist, and some of which no foreign scholar has yet been able to examine for lack of time or of authorities or of opportunity? Even in its modern external forms, Shintō is sufficiently complex to task the united powers of the historian, philologist, and anthropologist, merely to trace out the multitudinous lines of its evolution, and to determine the sources of its various elements: primeval polytheisms and fetishisms, traditions of dubious origin, philosophical concepts from China, Korea, and elsewhere, – all mingled with Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. The so-called 'Revival of Pure Shintō' – an effort, aided by Government, to restore the cult to its archaic simplicity, by divesting it of foreign characteristics, and especially of every sign or token of Buddhist origin – resulted only, so far as the avowed purpose was concerned, in the destruction of priceless art, and in leaving the enigma of origins as complicated as before. Shintō had been too profoundly modified in the course of fifteen centuries of change to be thus remodelled by a fiat. For the like reason scholarly efforts to define its relation to national ethics by mere historical and philological analysis must fail: as well seek to define the ultimate secret of Life by the elements of the body which it animates. Yet when the result of such efforts shall have been closely combined with a deep knowledge of Japanese thought and feeling, – the thought and sentiment, not of a special class, but of the people at large, – then indeed all that Shintō was and is may be fully comprehended. And this may be accomplished, I fancy, through the united labour of European and Japanese scholars.

Yet something of what Shintō signifies, – in the simple poetry of its beliefs, – in the home training of the child, – in the worship of filial piety before the tablets of the ancestors, – may be learned during a residence of some years among the people, by one who lives their life and adopts their manners and customs. With such experience he can at least claim the right to express his own conception of Shintō.

§ 2

Those far-seeing rulers of the Meiji era, who disestablished Buddhism to strengthen Shintō, doubtless knew they were giving new force not only to a faith in perfect harmony with their own state policy, but likewise to one possessing in itself a far more profound vitality than the alien creed, which although omnipotent as an art-influence, had never found deep root in the intellectual soil of Japan. Buddhism was already in decrepitude, though transplanted from China scarcely more than thirteen centuries before; while Shintō, though doubtless older by many a thousand years, seems rather to have gained than to have lost force through all the periods of change. Eclectic like the genius of the race, it had appropriated and assimilated all forms of foreign thought which could aid its material manifestation or fortify its ethics. Buddhism had attempted to absorb its gods, even as it had adopted previously the ancient deities of Brahmanism; but Shintō, while seeming to yield, was really only borrowing strength from its rival. And this marvellous vitality of Shintō is due to the fact that in the course of its long development out of unrecorded beginnings, it became at a very ancient epoch, and below the surface still remains, a religion of the heart. Whatever be the origin of its rites and traditions, its ethical spirit has become identified with all the deepest and best emotions of the race. Hence, in Izumo especially, the attempt to create a Buddhist-

Shintōism resulted only in the formation of a Shintō-Buddhism.

And the secret living force of Shintō to-day – that force which repels missionary efforts at proselytizing – means something much more profound than tradition or worship or ceremonialism. Shintō may yet, without loss of real power, survive all these. Certainly the expansion of the popular mind through education, the influences of modern science, must compel modification or abandonment of many ancient Shintō conceptions; but the ethics of Shintō will surely endure. For Shintō signifies character in the higher sense, – courage, courtesy, honour, and above all things, loyalty. The spirit of Shintō is the spirit of filial piety, the zest of duty, the readiness to surrender life for a principle without a thought of wherefore. It is the docility of the child; it is the sweetness of the Japanese woman. It is conservatism likewise; the wholesome check upon the national tendency to cast away the worth of the entire past in rash eagerness to assimilate too much of the foreign present. It is religion, – but religion transformed into hereditary moral impulse, – religion transmuted into ethical instinct. It is the whole emotional life of the race, – the Soul of Japan.

The child is born Shintō. Home teaching and school training only give expression to what is innate: they do not plant new seed; they do but quicken the ethical sense transmitted as a trait ancestral. Even as a Japanese infant inherits such ability to handle a writing-brush as never can be acquired by Western fingers, so does it inherit ethical sympathies totally different from our own. Ask a class of Japanese students – young students of fourteen to sixteen – to tell their dearest wishes; and if they have confidence in the questioner, perhaps nine out of ten will answer: 'To die for His Majesty Our Emperor.' And the wish soars from the heart pure as any

wish for martyrdom ever born. How much this sense of loyalty may or may not have been weakened in such great centres as Tōkyō by the new agnosticism and by the rapid growth of other nineteenth-century ideas among the student class, I do not know; but in the country it remains as natural to boyhood as joy. Unreasoning it also is, – unlike those loyal sentiments with us, the results of maturer knowledge and settled conviction. Never does the Japanese youth ask himself why; the beauty of self-sacrifice alone is the all-sufficing motive. Such ecstatic loyalty is a part of the national life; it is in the blood, – inherent as the impulse of the ant to perish for its little republic, – unconscious as the loyalty of bees to their queen. It is Shintō.

That readiness to sacrifice one's own life for loyalty's sake, for the sake of a superior, for the sake of honour, which has distinguished the race in modern times, would seem also to have been a national characteristic from the earliest period of its independent existence. Long before the epoch of established feudalism, when honourable suicide became a matter of rigid etiquette, not for warriors only, but even for women and little children, the giving one's life for one's prince, even when the sacrifice could avail nothing, was held a sacred duty. Among various instances which might be cited from the ancient *Kojiki*, the following is not the least impressive:

Prince Mayowa, at the age of only seven years, having killed his father's slayer, fled into the house of the Grandee (*Omi*) Tsubura. 'Then Prince Oho-hatsuse raised an army, and besieged that house. And the arrows that were shot were for multitude like the ears of the reeds. And the Grandee Tsubura came forth himself, and having taken off the weapons with which he was girded, did obeisance eight times, and said: "The maiden-princess Kara, my daughter whom thou deignedst

anon to woo, is at thy service. Again I will present to thee five granaries. Though a vile slave of a Grandee exerting his utmost strength in the fight can scarcely hope to conquer, yet must he die rather than desert a prince who, trusting in him, has entered into his house." Having thus spoken, he again took his weapons, and went in once more to fight. Then, their strength being exhausted, and their arrows finished, he said to the Prince: "My hands are wounded, and our arrows are finished. We cannot now fight: what shall be done?" The Prince replied, saying: "There is nothing more to do. Do thou now slay me." So the Grandee Tsubura thrust the Prince to death with his sword, and forthwith killed himself by cutting off his own head.'

Thousands of equally strong examples could easily be quoted from later Japanese history, including many which occurred even within the memory of the living. Nor was it for persons alone that to die might become a sacred duty: in certain contingencies conscience held it scarcely less a duty to die for a purely personal conviction; and he who held any opinion which he believed of paramount importance would, when other means failed, write his views in a letter of farewell, and then take his own life, in order to call attention to his beliefs and to prove their sincerity. Such an instance occurred only last year in Tōkyō,[1] when the young lieutenant of militia, Ōhara Takeyoshi, killed himself by *harakiri* in the cemetery of Saitokuji, leaving a letter stating as the reason for his act, his hope to force public recognition of the danger to Japanese independence from the growth of Russian power in the North Pacific. But a much more touching sacrifice, in May of the same year, – a sacrifice conceived in the purest and most innocent spirit of loyalty, – was that of the young girl Yoko Hatake-

[1] This was written early in 1892.

yama, who, after the attempt to assassinate the Czarevitch, travelled from Tōkyō to Kyōto and there killed herself before the gate of the Kenchō, merely as a vicarious atonement for the incident which had caused shame to Japan and grief to the Father of the people, – His Sacred Majesty the Emperor.

§ 3

As to its exterior forms, modern Shintō is indeed difficult to analyse; but through all the intricate texture of extraneous beliefs so thickly interwoven about it, indications of its earliest character are still easily discerned. In certain of its primitive rites, in its archaic prayers and texts and symbols, in the history of its shrines, and even in many of the artless ideas of its poorest worshippers, it is plainly revealed as the most ancient of all forms of worship, – that which Herbert Spencer terms 'the root of all religions,' – devotion to the dead. Indeed, it has been frequently so expounded by its own greatest scholars and theologians. Its divinities are ghosts; *all* the dead become deities. In the *Tama-no-mihashira* the great commentator Hirata says 'the spirits of the dead continue to exist in the unseen world which is everywhere about us, and they all become gods of varying character and degrees of influence. Some reside in temples built in their honour; others hover near their tombs; and they continue to render services to their prince, parents, wife, and children, as when in the body.'[1] And they do more than this, for they control the lives and the doings of men. 'Every human action,' says Hirata, 'is the work of a god.'[2] And Motowori, scarcely less famous an exponent of

[1] Quoted from Mr. Satow's masterly essay, 'The Revival of Pure Shintō,' published in the *Transactions* of the Asiatic Society of Japan. By 'gods' are not necessarily meant beneficent *Kami*. Shintō has no devils; but it has its 'bad gods' as well as good deities.

[2] Satow, 'The Revival of Pure Shintō.'

pure Shintō doctrine, writes: 'All the moral ideas which a man requires are implanted in his bosom by the gods, and are of the same nature with those instincts which impel him to eat when he is hungry or to drink when he is thirsty.'[1] With this doctrine of Intuition no decalogue is required, no fixed code of ethics; and the human conscience is declared to be the only necessary guide. Though every action be 'the work of a Kami.' yet each man has within him the power to discern the righteous impulse from the unrighteous, the influence of the good deity from that of the evil. No moral teacher is so infallible as one's own heart. 'To have learned that there is no way (*michi*),'[2] says Motowori, 'to be learned and practiced, is really to have learned the Way of the Gods.'[3] And Hirata writes: 'If you desire to practise true virtue, learn to stand in awe of the Unseen; and that will prevent you from doing wrong. Make a vow to the Gods who rule over the Unseen, and cultivate the conscience (*ma-gokoro*) implanted in you; and then you will never wander from the way.' How this spiritual self-culture may best be obtained, the same great expounder has stated with almost equal brevity: 'Devotion to the memory of ancestors is the mainspring of all virtues. No one who discharges his duty to them will ever be disrespectful to the Gods or to his living parents. Such a man will be faithful to his prince, loyal to his friends, and kind and gentle with his wife and children.'[4]

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] In the sense of *Moral Path*, – *i.e.* an ethical system.

[3] Satow, 'The Revival of Pure Shintō.' The whole force of Motowori's words will not be fully understood unless the reader knows that the term 'Shintō' is of comparatively modern origin in Japan, – having been borrowed from the Chinese to distinguish the ancient faith from Buddhism; and that the old name for the primitive religion is Kami-no-michi, 'the Way of the Gods.'

[4] Satow, 'The Revival of Pure Shintō.'

How far are these antique beliefs removed from the ideas of the nineteenth century? Certainly not so far that we can afford to smile at them. The faith of the primitive man and the knowledge of the most profound psychologist may meet in strange harmony upon the threshold of the same ultimate truth, and the thought of a child may repeat the conclusions of a Spencer or a Schopenhauer. Are not our ancestors in very truth our *Kami*? Is not every action indeed the work of the Dead who dwell within us? Have not our impulses and tendencies, our capacities and weaknesses, our heroisms and timidities, been created by those vanished myriads from whom we received the all-mysterious bequest of Life? Do we still think of that infinitely complex Something which is each one of us, and which we call EGO, as 'I' or as 'They'? What is our pride or shame but the pride or shame of the Unseen in that which They have made? – and what our Conscience but the inherited sum of countless dead experiences with varying good and evil? Nor can we hastily reject the Shintō thought that all the dead become gods, while we respect the convictions of those strong souls of to-day who proclaim the divinity of man.

§ 4

Shintō ancestor-worship, no doubt, like all ancestor-worship, was developed out of funeral rites, according to that general law of religious evolution traced so fully by Herbert Spencer. And there is reason to believe that the early forms of Shintō public worship may have been evolved out of a yet older family worship, – much after the manner in which M. Fustel de Coulanges, in his wonderful book, *La Cité Antique*, has shown the religious public institutions among the Greeks and Romans to have been developed from the religion of the hearth. Indeed, the word ujigami, now used to signify a Shintō

parish temple, and also its deity, means '*family* God,' and in its present form is a corruption or contraction of uchi-no-Kami, meaning the 'god of the interior' or 'the god of the house.' Shintō expounders have, it is true, attempted to interpret the term otherwise; and Hirata, as quoted by Mr. Ernest Satow, declared the name should be applied only to the *common ancestor*, or ancestors, or to one so entitled to the gratitude of a community as to merit equal honours. Such, undoubtedly, was the just use of the term in his time, and long before it; but the etymology of the word would certainly seem to indicate its origin in family worship, and to confirm modern scientific beliefs in regard to the evolution of religious institutions.

Now just as among the Greeks and Latins the family cult always continued to exist through all the development and expansion of the public religion, so the Shintō family worship has continued concomitantly with the communal worship at the countless ujigami, with popular worship at the famed Oho-ya-shiro of various provinces or districts, and with national worship at the great shrines of Ise and Kitzuki. Many objects connected with the family cult are certainly of alien or modern origin; but its simple rites and its unconscious poetry retain their archaic charm. And, to the student of Japanese life, by far the most interesting aspect of Shintō is offered in this home worship, which, like the home worship of the antique Occident, exists in a dual form.

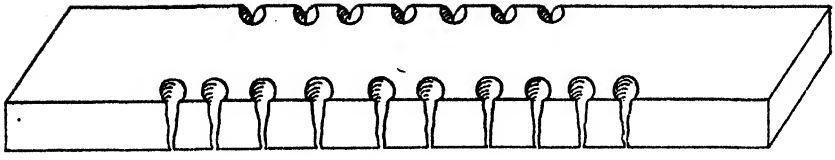
§ 5

In nearly all Izumo dwellings there is a kamidana,[1] or 'Shelf of the Gods.' On this is usually placed a small Shintō shrine

[1] From *Kami*, 'the [Powers] Above,' or the Gods, and *tana*, 'a shelf.' The initial 't' of the latter word changes into 'd' in the compound, – just as that of *tokkuri*, 'a jar' or 'bottle,' becomes *dokkuri* in the compound *o-mikidokkuri*.

(*miya*) containing tablets bearing the names of gods (one at least of which tablets is furnished by the neighboring Shintō parish temple), and various ofuda, holy texts or charms which most often are written promises in the name of some Kami to protect his worshipper. If there be no miya, the tablets or ofuda are simply placed upon the shelf in a certain order, the most sacred having the middle place. Very rarely are images to be seen upon a kamidana: for primitive Shintōism excluded images rigidly as Jewish or Mohammedan law; and all Shintō iconography belongs to a comparatively modern era, – especially to the period of Ryōbu-Shintō, – and must be considered of Buddhist origin. If there be any images, they will probably be such as have been made only within recent years at Kitzuki: those small twin figures of Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami and of Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami, described in a former paper upon the Kitzuki-no-oho-yashiro. Shintō kakemono, which are also of latter-day origin, representing incidents from the *Kojiki*, are much more common than Shintō icons: these usually occupy the toko, or alcove, in the same room in which the kamidana is placed; but they will not be seen in the houses of the more cultivated classes. Ordinarily there will be found upon the kamidana nothing but the simple miya containing some ofuda: very, very seldom will a mirror[1] be seen, or gohei, – except the gohei attached to the small shimenawa either hung just above the kamidana or suspended to the box-like frame in which the miya sometimes is placed. The shimenawa and

[1] The mirror, as an emblem of female divinities, is kept in the secret innermost shrine of various Shintō temples. But the mirror of metal commonly placed before the public gaze in a Shintō shrine is not really of Shintō origin, but was introduced into Japan as a Buddhist symbol of the Shingon sect. As the mirror is the symbol in Shintō of female divinities, the sword is the emblem of male deities. The real symbols of the god or goddess are not, however, exposed to human gaze under any circumstances.



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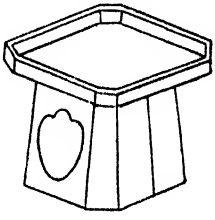

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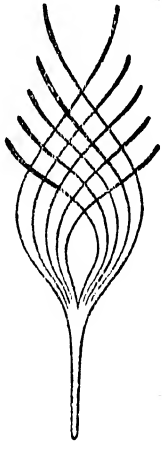


3

1. Sacred fire-drill of the Great Temple of Kitzuki.
2. O-MIKIDOKKURI, or vessel used to contain the sake offered to the Gods.
3. KUCHI-SASHI, or stopper, of the o-mikidokkuri. (There are other symbolic forms: this is probably the oldest as well as the most common).
4. SAMBŌ, or little stand upon which offerings to the Shintō Gods are placed. The sambo is also used in family worship, and in certain household ceremonies.

SACRED OBJECTS (SHINTŌ).

the paper gohei are the true emblems of Shintō: even the ofuda and the mamori are quite modern. Not only before the household shrine, but also above the house-door of almost every home in Izumo, the shimenawa is suspended. It is ordinarily a thin rope of rice straw; but before the dwellings of high Shintō officials, such as the Taisha-Guji of Kitzuki, its size and weight are enormous. One of the first curious facts that the traveller in Izumo cannot fail to be impressed by is the universal presence of this symbolic rope of straw, which may sometimes even be seen round a rice-field. But the grand displays of the sacred symbol are upon the great festivals of the new year, the accession of Jimmu Tennō to the throne of Japan, and the Emperor's birthday. Then all the miles of streets are festooned with shimenawa thick as ship-cables.

§ 6

A particular feature of Matsue are the miya-shops, – establishments not, indeed, peculiar to the old Izumo town, but much more interesting than those to be found in larger cities of other provinces. There are miya of a hundred varieties and sizes, from the child's toy miya which sells for less than one sen, to the large shrine destined for some rich home, and costing perhaps ten yen or more. Besides these, the household shrines of Shintō, may occasionally be seen massive shrines of precious wood, lacquered and gilded, worth from three hundred even to fifteen hundred yen. These are not household shrines; but festival shrines, and are made only for rich merchants. They are displayed on Shintō holidays, and twice a year are borne through the streets in procession, to shouts of '*Chosaya! chosaya!*'[1] Each temple parish also possesses a

[1] Anciently the two great Shintō festivals on which the miya were thus carried in procession were the Yoshigami-no-matsuri, or festival of the God of the New Year, and the anniversary of Jimmu Tennō

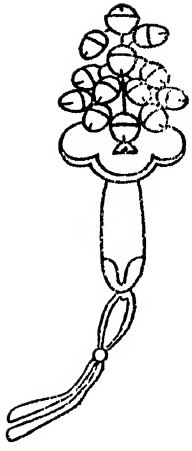
large portable miya which is paraded on these occasions with much chanting and beating of drums. The majority of household miya are cheap constructions. A very fine one can be purchased for about two yen; but those little shrines one sees in the houses of the common people cost, as a rule, considerably less than half a yen. And elaborate or costly household shrines are contrary to the spirit of pure Shintō. The true miya should be made of spotless white hinoki[1] wood, and be put together without nails. Most of those I have seen in the shops had their several parts joined only with rice-paste; but the skill of the maker rendered this sufficient. Pure Shintō requires that a miya should be without gilding or ornamentation. The beautiful miniature temples in some rich homes may justly excite admiration by their artistic structure and decoration; but the ten or thirteen cent miya, in the house of a labourer or a kurumaya, of plain white wood, truly represents that spirit of simplicity characterizing the primitive religion.

§ 7

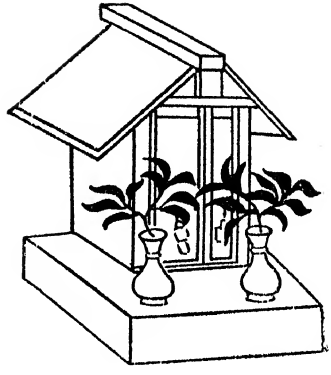
The kamidana or 'God-shelf,' upon which are placed the miya and other sacred objects of Shintō worship, is usually fastened at a height of about six or seven feet above the floor. As a rule it should not be placed higher than the hand can reach with ease; but in houses having lofty rooms the miya

to the throne. The second of these is still observed. The celebration of the Emperor's birthday is the only other occasion when the miya are paraded. On both days the streets are beautifully decorated with lanterns and shimenawa, the fringed ropes of rice straw which are the emblems of Shintō. Nobody now knows exactly what the words chanted on these days (*chosaya! chosaya!*) mean. One theory is that they are a corruption of Sagicho, the name of a great samurai military festival, which was celebrated nearly at the same time as the Yoshigami-no-matsuri, – both holidays now being obsolete.

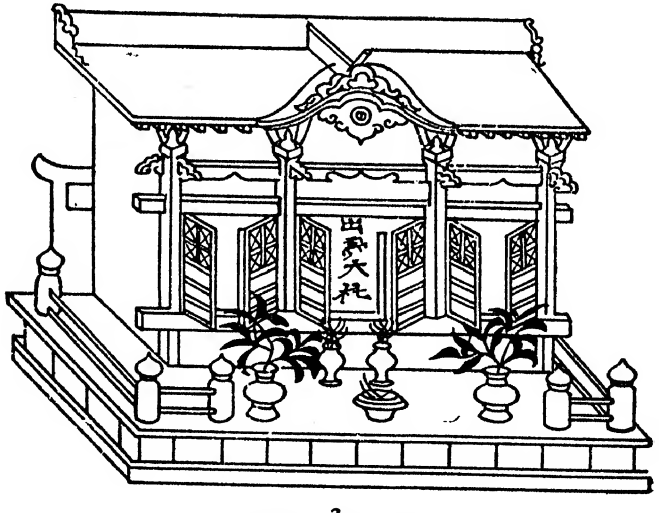
[1] *Thuya obtusa.*



1
SUZU: Instrument used by the Shintō priestess in her sacred dance.



2
MIYA, or Shintō household shrine of the cheapest form.



3
MIYA, or household shrine of a wealthy family.

SACRED OBJECTS (SHINTŌ).

is sometimes put up at such a height that the sacred offerings cannot be made without the aid of a box or other object to stand upon. It is not commonly a part of the house structure, but a plain shelf attached with brackets either to the wall itself, at some angle of the apartment, or, as is much more usual, to the kamoi, or horizontal grooved beam, in which the screens of opaque paper (*fusuma*), which divide room from room, slide to and fro. Occasionally it is painted or lacquered. But the ordinary kamidana is of white wood, and is made larger or smaller in proportion to the size of the miya, or the number of the ofuda and other sacred objects to be placed upon it. In some houses, notably those of innkeepers and small merchants, the kamidana is made long enough to support a number of small shrines dedicated to different Shintō deities, particularly those believed to preside over wealth and commercial prosperity. In the houses of the poor it is nearly always placed in the room facing the street; and Matsue shopkeepers usually erect it in their shops, – so that the passer-by or the customer can tell at a glance in what deities the occupant puts his trust. There are many regulations concerning it. It may be placed to face south or east, but should not face west, and under no possible circumstances should it be suffered to face north or north-west. One explanation of this is the influence upon Shintō of Chinese philosophy, according to which there is some fancied relation between South or East and the Male Principle, and between West or North and the Female Principle. But the popular notion on the subject is that because a dead person is buried with the head turned north, it would be very wrong to place a miya so as to face north, – since everything relating to death is impure; and the regulation about the west is not strictly observed. Most kamidana in Izumo, however, face south or east. In the houses of the poorest – often consisting of but one apartment – there can be little

choice as to rooms; but it is a rule, observed in the dwellings of the middle classes, that the kamidana must not be placed either in the guest room (*zashiki*) nor in the kitchen; and in shizoku houses its place is usually in one of the smaller family apartments. Respect must be shown it. One must not sleep, for example, or even lie down to rest, with his feet turned towards it. One must not pray before it, or even stand before it, while in a state of religious impurity, – such as that entailed by having touched a corpse, or attended a Buddhist funeral, or even during the period of mourning for kindred buried according to the Buddhist rite. Should any member of the family be thus buried, then during fifty days[1] the kamidana must be entirely screened from view with pure white paper, and even the Shintō ofuda, or pious invocations fastened upon the house-door, must have white paper pasted over them. During the same mourning period the fire in the house is considered unclean; and at the close of the term all the ashes of the braziers and of the kitchen must be cast away, and new fire kindled with a flint and steel. Nor are funerals the only source of legal uncleanliness. Shintō, as the religion of purity and purification, has a Deuteronomy of quite an extensive kind. During certain periods women must not even pray before the miya, much less make offerings or touch the sacred vessels, or kindle the lights of the Kami.

§ 8

Before the miya, or whatever holy object of Shintō worship be placed upon the kamidana, are set two quaintly shaped jars for the offerings of sake; two small vases, to contain sprays

[1] Such at least is the mourning period under such circumstances in certain samurai families. Others say twenty days is sufficient. The Buddhist code of mourning is extremely varied and complicated, and would require much space to dilate upon.

of the sacred plant sakaki, or offerings of flowers; and a small lamp, shaped like a tiny saucer, where a wick of rush-pith floats in rape-seed oil. Strickly speaking, all these utensils, except the flower-vases, should be made of unglazed red earthenware, such as we find described in the early chapters of the *Kojiki*: and still at Shintō festivals in Izumo, when sake is drunk in honour of the gods, it is drunk out of cups of red baked unglazed clay shaped like shallow round dishes. But of late years it has become the fashion to make all the utensils of a fine kamidana of brass or bronze, – even the hanaiké, or flower-vases. Among the poor, the most archaic utensils are still used to a great extent, especially in the remoter country districts; the lamp being a simple saucer or kawaraké of red clay; and the flower-vases most often bamboo cups, made by simply cutting a section of bamboo immediately below a joint and about five inches above it.

The brazen lamp is a much more complicated object than the kawaraké, which costs but one rin. The brass lamp costs about twenty-five sen, at least. It consists of two parts. The lower part, shaped like a very shallow, broad wineglass, with a very thick stem, has an interior as well as an exterior rim; and the bottom of a correspondingly broad and shallow brass cup, which is the upper part and contains the oil, fits exactly into this inner rim. This kind of lamp is always furnished with a small brass object in the shape of a flat ring, with a stem set at right angles to the surface of the ring. It is used for moving the floating wick and keeping it at any position required; and the little perpendicular stem is long enough to prevent the fingers from touching the oil.

The most curious objects to be seen on any ordinary kamidana are the stoppers of the sake-vessels or o-mikidokkuri ('honourable sake-jars'). These stoppers – o-mikidokkuri-no-kuchisashi – may be made of brass, or of fine thin slips of

wood jointed and bent into the singular form required. Properly speaking, the thing is not a real stopper, in spite of its name; its lower part does not fill the mouth of the jar at all: it simply hangs in the orifice like a leaf put there stem downwards. I find it difficult to learn its history; but, though there are many designs of it, – the finer ones being of brass, – the shape of all seems to hint at a Buddhist origin. Possibly the shape was borrowed from a Buddhist symbol, – the Hoshi-no-tama, that mystic gem whose lambent glow (iconographically suggested as a playing of flame) is the emblem of Pure Essence; and thus the object would be typical at once of the purity of the wine-offering and the purity of the heart of the giver.

The little lamp may not be lighted every evening in all homes, since there are families too poor to afford even this infinitesimal nightly expenditure of oil. But upon the first, fifteenth, and twenty-eighth of each month the light is always kindled; for these are Shintō holidays of obligation, when offerings must be made to the gods, and when all uji-ko, or parishioners of a Shintō temple, are supposed to visit their ujigami. In every home on these days sake is poured as an offering into the o-mikidokkuri, and in the vases of the kamidana are placed sprays of the holy sakaki, or sprigs of pine, or fresh flowers. On the first day of the new year the kamidana is always decked with sakaki, moromoki (ferns), and pine-sprigs, and also with a shimenawa; and large double rice cakes are placed upon it as offerings to the gods.

§ 9

But only the ancient gods of Shintō are worshipped before the kamidana. The family ancestors or family dead are worshipped either in a separate room (called the mitamaya, or 'Spirit Chamber'), or, if worshipped according to the Buddhist rites, before the butsuma or butsudan.

THE HOUSEHOLD SHRINE

The Buddhist family worship coexists in the vast majority of Izumo homes with the Shintō family worship; and whether the dead be honoured in the mitamaya or before the butsudan altogether depends upon the religious traditions of the household. Moreover, there are families in Izumo – particularly in Kitzuki – whose members do not profess Buddhism in any form, and a very few, belonging to the Shin-shū or Nichiren-shū,[1] whose members do not practise Shintō. But the domestic cult of the dead is maintained, whether the family be Shintō or Buddhist. The ihai or tablets of the Buddhist family dead (Hotoke) are never placed in a special room or shrine, but in the Buddhist household shrine[2] along with the images or pic-

[1] In spite of the supposed rigidity of the Nichiren sect in such matters, most followers of its doctrine in Izumo are equally fervent Shintōists. I have not been able to observe whether the same is true of Izumo Shin-shū families as a rule; but I know that some Shin-shū believers in Matsue worship at Shintō shrines. Adoring only that form of Buddha called Amida, the Shin sect might be termed a Buddhist 'Unitarianism.' It seems never to have been able to secure a strong footing in Izumo on account of its doctrinal hostility to Shintō. Elsewhere throughout Japan it is the most vigorous and prosperous of all Buddhist sects.

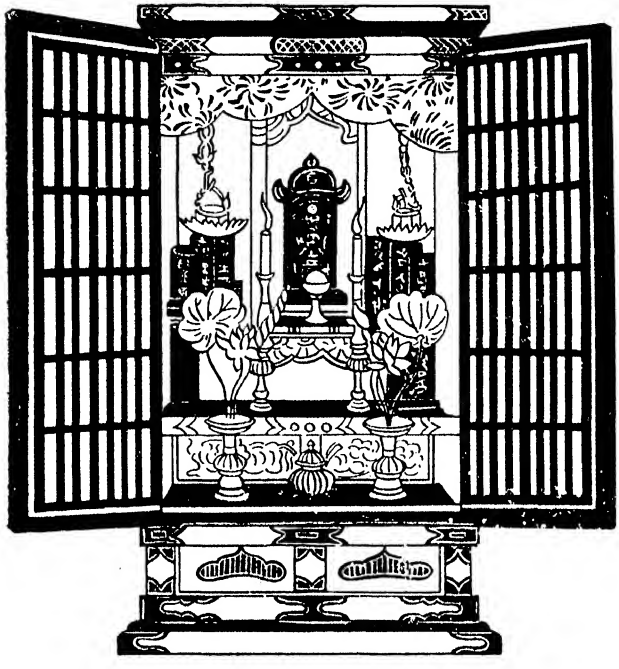
[2] Mr. Morse, in his *Japanese Homes*, published on hearsay a very strange error when he stated: 'The Buddhist household shrines *rest on the floor* – at least so I was informed.' They never rest on the floor under any circumstances. In the better class of houses special architectural arrangements are made for the butsudan; an alcove, recess, or other contrivance, often so arranged as to be concealed from view by a sliding panel or a little door. In smaller dwellings it may be put on a shelf, for want of a better place, and in the homes of the poor, on the top of the tansu, or clothes-chest. It is never placed so high as the kamidana, but seldom at a less height than three feet above the floor. In Mr. Morse's own illustration of a Buddhist household shrine (p. 226) it does not rest on the floor at all, but on the upper shelf of a cupboard, which must not be confounded with the butsudan – a very small one. The sketch in question seems to have been made during the Festival of the Dead, for the offerings in the picture are those of

tures of Buddhist divinities usually there inclosed, – or, at least, this is always the case when the honours paid them are given according to the Buddhist instead of the Shintō rite. The form of the butsudan or butsuma, the character of its holy images, its ofuda, or its pictures, and even the prayers said before it, differ according to the fifteen different shū, or sects; and a very large volume would have to be written in order to treat the subject of the butsuma exhaustively. Therefore I must content myself with stating that there are Buddhist household shrines of all dimensions, prices, and degrees of magnificence; and that the butsudan of the Shin-shū, although to me the least interesting of all, is popularly considered to be the most beautiful in design and finish. The butsudan of a very poor household may be worth a few cents, but the rich devotee might purchase in Kyōto a shrine worth as many thousands of yen as he could pay.

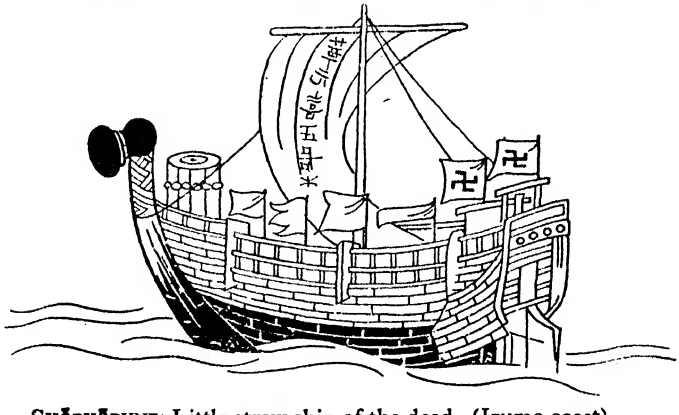
Though the forms of the butsuma and the character of its contents may greatly vary, the form of the ancestral or mortuary tablet is generally that represented in Fig. 4 of the illustrations of ihai given in this book.[1] There are some much more elaborate shapes, costly and rare, and simpler shapes of the

the Bommatsuri. At that time the household butsudan is always exposed to view, and often moved from its usual place in order to obtain room for the offerings to be set before it. To place any holy object on the floor is considered by the Japanese very disrespectful. As for Shintō objects, to place even a mamori on the floor is deemed a sin.

[1] Two ihai are always made for each Buddhist dead. One usually larger than that placed in the family shrine, is kept in the temple of which the deceased was a parishioner, together with a cup in which tea or water is daily poured out as an offering. In almost any large temple, thousands of such ihai may be seen, arranged in rows, tier above tier, – each with its cup before it, – for even the souls of the dead are supposed to drink tea. Sometimes, I fear, the offering is forgotten, for I have seen rows of cups containing only dust, the fault, perhaps, of some lazy acolyte.



BUTSUDAN (Zen-shū), showing the family ihai grouped within.



SHŌRYŌBUNE: Little straw ship of the dead. (Izumo coast).

SACRED OBJECTS (BUDDHIST).

cheapest and plainest descriptions; but the form thus illustrated is the common one in Izumo and the whole San-indo country. There are differences, however, of size; and the ihai of a man is larger than that of a woman, and has a headpiece also, which the tablet of a female has not; while a child's ihai is always very small. The average height of the ihai made for a male adult is a little more than a foot, and its thickness about an inch. It has a top, or headpiece, surmounted by the symbol of the Hoshi-no-tama or Mystic Gem, and ordinarily decorated with a cloud-design of some kind, and the pedestal is a lotus-flower rising out of clouds. As a general rule all this is richly lacquered and gilded; the tablet itself being lacquered in black, and bearing the posthumous name, or kaimyō, in letters of gold, – *ken-mu-ji-shō-shin-ji*, or other syllables indicating the supposed virtues of the departed. The poorest people, unable to afford such handsome tablets, have ihai made of plain wood; and the kaimyō is sometimes simply written on these in black characters; but more commonly it is written upon a strip of white paper, which is then pasted upon the ihai with rice-paste. The living name is perhaps inscribed upon the back of the tablet. Such tablets accumulate, of course, with the passing of generations; and in certain homes great numbers are preserved.

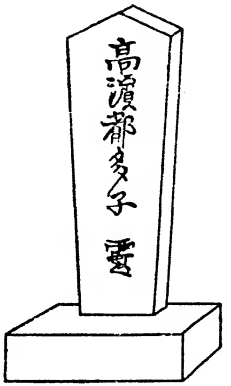
A beautiful and touching custom still exists in Izumo, and perhaps throughout Japan, although much less common than it used to be. So far as I can learn, however, it was always confined to the cultivated classes. When a husband dies, two ihai are made, in case the wife resolves never to marry again. On one of these the kaimyō of the dead man is painted in characters of gold, and on the other that of the living widow; but, in the latter case, the first character of the kaimyō is painted in red, and the other characters in gold. These two tablets are then placed in the household butsuma. Two larger ones,

similarly inscribed, are placed in the parish temple; but no cup is set before that of the wife. The solitary crimson ideograph signifies a solemn pledge to remain faithful to the memory of the dead. Furthermore, the wife loses her living name among all her friends and relatives, and is thereafter addressed only by a fragment of her kaimyō, – as, for example, 'Shin-toku-in-San,' an abbreviation of the much longer and more sonorous posthumous name, *Shin-toku-in-den-jōyo-teisō-daishi.*[1] Thus to be called by one's kaimyō is at once an honour to the memory of the husband and the constancy of the bereaved wife. A precisely similar pledge is taken by a man after the loss of a wife to whom he was passionately attached; and one crimson letter upon his ihai registers the vow not only in the home but also in the place of public worship. But the widower is never called by his kaimyō, as is the widow.

The first religious duty of the morning in a Buddhist household is to set before the tablets of the dead a little cup of tea, made with the first hot water prepared, – *O-Hotoke-San-ni-o-cha-to-ageru.*[2] Daily offerings of boiled rice are also made; and fresh flowers are put in the shrine vases; and incense – although not allowed by Shintō – is burned before the tablets. At night, and also during the day upon certain festivals, both candles and a small oil-lamp are lighted in the butsuma, – a lamp somewhat differently shaped from the lamp of the miya and called rintō. On the day of each month corresponding to

[1] This is a fine example of a samurai kaimyō. The kaimyō of kwazoku or samurai are different from those of humbler dead; and a Japanese, by a single glance at an ihai, can tell at once to what class of society the deceased belonged, by the Buddhist words used.

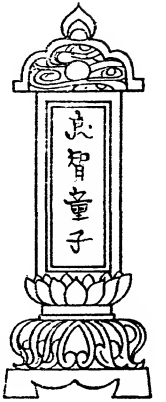
[2] 'Presenting the honourable tea to the august Buddhas,' – for by Buddhist faith it is hoped, if not believed, that the dead become Buddhas and escape the sorrows of further transmigration. Thus the expression 'is dead' is often rendered in Japanese by the phrase 'is become a Buddha.'



1

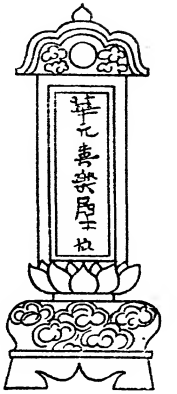
2

Ihai of a Samurai lady.



3

Ihai of a child – a little boy.



4

Ordinary form of a man's ihai.

5

Elaborately ornamented ihai of a Samurai official.

SHINTŌ IHAI (IZUMO).

BUDDHIST IHAI (ZEN-SHŪ)

the date of death a little repast is served before the tablets, consisting of shōjin-ryōri only, the vegetarian food of the Buddhists. But as Shintō family worship has its special annual festival, which endures from the first to the third day of the new year, so Buddhist ancestor-worship has its yearly Bonku, or Bommatsuri, lasting from the thirteenth to the sixteenth day of the seventh month. This is the Buddhist Feast of Souls. Then the butsuma is decorated to the utmost, special offerings of food and of flowers are made, and all the house is made beautiful to welcome the coming of the ghostly visitors.

Now Shintō, like Buddhism, has its ihai; but these are of the simplest possible shape and material, – mere slips of plain white wood. The average height is only about eight inches. These tablets are either placed in a special miya kept in a different room from that in which the shrine of the Kami is erected, or else simply arranged on a small shelf called by the people *Mitama-San-no-tana*, – 'the Shelf of the August *Spirits*.' The shelf or the shrine of the ancestors and household dead is placed always at a considerable height in the mitamaya or soreisha (as the Spirit Chamber is sometimes called), just as is the miya of the Kami in the other apartment. Sometimes no tablets are used, the name being simply painted upon the woodwork of the Spirit Shrine. But Shintō has no kaimyō: the living name of the dead is written upon the ihai, with the sole addition of the word '*Mitama*' (Spirit). And monthly upon the day corresponding to the menstrual date of death, offerings of fish, wine, and other food are made to the spirits, accompanied by special prayer.[1] The Mitama-San have also

[1] The idea underlying this offering of food and drink to the dead or to the gods, is not so irrational as unthinking critics have declared it to be. The dead are *not* supposed to consume any of the visible substance of the food set before them, for they are thought to be in an ethereal state requiring only the most vapoury kind of nutrition. The

their particular lamps and flower-vases, and, though in lesser degree, are honoured with rites like those of the Kami.

The prayers uttered before the ihai of either faith begin with the respective religious formulas of Shintō or of Buddhism. The Shintōist, clapping his hands thrice or four times,[1] first utters the sacramental *Harai-tamai.* The Buddhist, according to his sect, murmurs *Namu-myō-hō-ren-ge-kyō*, or *Namu Amida Butsu*, or some other holy words of prayer or of praise to the Buddha, ere commencing his prayer to the ancestors. The words said to them are seldom spoken aloud, either by Shintōist or Buddhist: they are either whispered very low under the breath, or shaped only within the heart.

§ 10

At nightfall in Izumo homes the lamps of the gods and of the ancestors are kindled, either by a trusted servant or by some member of the family. Shintō orthodox regulations require that the lamps should be filled with pure vegetable oil only, – tomoshiabura, – and oil of rape-seed is customarily used. However, there is an evident inclination among the poorer classes to substitute a microscopic kerosene lamp for the ancient form of utensil. But by the strictly orthodox this is held to be very wrong, and even to light the lamps with a match is somewhat heretical. For it is not supposed that

idea is that they absorb only the invisible essence of the food. And as fruits and other such offerings lose something of their flavour after having been exposed to the air for several hours, this slight change would have been taken in other days as evidence that the spirits had feasted upon them. Scientific education necessarily dissipates these consoling illusions, and with them a host of tender and beautiful fancies as to the relation between the living and the dead.

[1] I find that the number of clappings differs in different provinces somewhat. In Kyūshū the clapping is very long, especially before the prayer to the Rising Sun.

matches are always made with pure substances, and the lights of the Kami should be kindled only with purest fire, – that holy natural fire which lies hidden within all things. Therefore in some little closet in the home of any strictly orthodox Shintō family there is always a small box containing the ancient instruments used for the lighting of holy fire. These consist of the hi-uchi-ishi, or 'fire-strike-stone'; the hi-uchi-gane, or steel; the hokuchi, or tinder, made of dried moss; and the tsukegi, fine slivers of resinous pine. A little tinder is laid upon the flint and set smouldering with a few strokes of the steel, and blown upon until it flames. A slip of pine is then ignited at this flame, and with it the lamps of the ancestors and the gods are lighted. If several great deities are represented in the miya or upon the kamidana by several ofuda, then a separate lamp is sometimes lighted for each; and if there be a butsuma in the dwelling, its tapers or lamp are lighted at the same time.

Although the use of the flint and steel for lighting the lamps of the gods will probably have become obsolete within another generation, it still prevails largely in Izumo, especially in the country districts. Even where the safety-match has entirely supplanted the orthodox utensils, the orthodox sentiment shows itself in the matter of the choice of matches to be used. Foreign matches are inadmissible: the native matchmaker quite successfully represented that foreign matches contained phosphorus 'made from the bones of dead animals,' and that to kindle the lights of the Kami with such unholy fire would be sacrilege. In other parts of Japan the matchmakers stamped upon their boxes the words: '*Saikyō go honzon yo*' (Fit for the use of the August High Temple of Saikyō[1]). But Shintō sentiment in Izumo was too strong to be affected much by any such

[1] Another name for Kyōto, the Sacred City of Japanese Buddhism.

declaration: indeed, the recommendation of the matches as suitable for use in a Shin-shū temple was of itself sufficient to prejudice Shintōists against them. Accordingly special precautions had to be taken before safety-matches could be satisfactorily introduced into the Province of the Gods. Izumo match-boxes now bear the inscription: '*Pure, and fit to use for kindling the lamps of the Kami, or of the Hotoke!*'

The inevitable danger to all things in Japan is fire. It is the traditional rule that when a house takes fire, the first objects to be saved, if possible, are the household gods and the tablets of the ancestors. It is even said that if these are saved, most of the family valuables are certain to be saved, and that if these are lost, all is lost.

§ 11

The terms soreisha and mitamaya, as used in Izumo, may, I am told, signify either the small miya in which the Shintō ihai (usually made of cherry-wood) is kept, or that part of the dwelling in which it is placed, and where the offerings are made. These, by all who can afford it, are served upon tables of plain white wood, and of the same high narrow form as the tables upon which offerings are made in the temples and at public funeral ceremonies.

The most ordinary form of prayer addressed to the ancient ancestors in the household cult of Shintō is not uttered aloud. After pronouncing the initial formula of all popular Shintō prayer, '*Harai-tamai*,' etc., the worshipper says, with his heart only, –

'Spirits august of our far-off ancestors, ye forefathers of the generations, and of our families and of our kindred, unto you, the founders of our homes, we this day utter the gladness of our thanks.'

In the family cult of the Buddhists a distinction is made between the household Hotoke – the souls of those long dead – and the souls of those but recently deceased. These last are called Shin-botoke, 'new Buddhas,' or more strictly, 'the newly dead.' No direct request for any supernatural favour is made to a Shin-botoke; for, though respectfully called Hotoke, the freshly departed soul is not really deemed to have reached Buddhahood: it is only on the long road thither, and is in need itself, perhaps, of aid, rather than capable of giving aid. Indeed, among the deeply pious its condition is a matter of affectionate concern. And especially is this the case when a little child dies; for it is thought that the soul of an infant is feeble and exposed to many dangers. Wherefore a mother, speaking to the departed soul of her child, will advise it, admonish it, command it tenderly, as if addressing a living son or daughter. The ordinary words said in Izumo homes to any Shin-botoke take rather the form of adjuration or counsel than of prayer, such as these: –

'*Jōbutsu seyō*,' or '*Jōbutsu shimasare*.' [Do thou become a Buddha.]

'*Mayō na yo*.' [Go not astray; or, Be never deluded.]

'*Miren-wo nokorazu*.' [Suffer no regret (for this world) to linger with thee.]

These prayers are never uttered aloud. Much more in accordance with the Occidental idea of prayer is the following, uttered by Shin-shū believers on behalf of a Shin-botoke: –

'*O-mukai kudasare Amida-Sama*.' [Vouchsafe, O Lord Amida, augustly to welcome (this soul).]

Needless to say that ancestor-worship, although adopted in China and Japan into Buddhism, is not of Buddhist origin. Needless also to say that Buddhism discountenances suicide. Yet in Japan, anxiety about the condition of the soul of the departed often caused suicide, – or at least justified it on the

part of those who, though accepting Buddhist dogma, might adhere to primitive custom. Retainers killed themselves in the belief that by dying they might give to the soul of their lord or lady, counsel, aid, and service. Thus in the novel *Hogen-no-mono-gatari*, a retainer is made to say after the death of his young master: –

'Over the mountain of Shide, over the ghostly River of Sanzu, who will conduct him? If he be afraid, will he not call my name, as he was wont to do? Surely better that, by slaying myself, I go to serve him as of old, than to linger here, and mourn for him in vain.'

In Buddhist household worship, the prayers addressed to the family Hotoke proper, the souls of those long dead, are very different from the addresses made to the Shin-botoke. The following are a few examples: they are always said under the breath:

'*Kanai anzen.*' [(Vouchsafe) that our family may be preserved.]

'*Enmei sakusai.*' [That we may enjoy long life without sorrow.]

'*Shōbai hanjo.*' [That our business may prosper.] [Said only by merchants and tradesmen.]

'*Shison chōkin.*' [That the perpetuity of our descent may be assured.]

'*Onteki taisan.*' [That our enemies be scattered.]

'*Yakubyō shōmetsu.*' [That pestilence may not come nigh us.]

Some of the above are used also by Shintō worshippers. The old samurai still repeat the special prayers of their caste: –

'*Tenka taihei.*' [That long peace may prevail throughout the world.]

'*Bu-un chōkyu.*' [That we may have eternal good-fortune in war.]

'*Ka-ei-manzoku.*' [That our house (*family*) may for ever remain fortunate.]

But besides these silent formulæ, any prayers prompted by the heart, whether of supplication or of gratitude, may, of course, be repeated. Such prayers are said, or rather thought, in the speech of daily life. The following little prayer uttered by an Izumo mother to the ancestral spirit, besought on behalf of a sick child, is an example: –

'*O-kage ni kodomo no byōki mo zenkwai itashimashite, arigatō-gozarimasŭ!*' [By thine august influence the illness of my child has passed away; – I thank thee.]

'*O-kage ni*' literally signifies 'in the august shadow of.' There is a ghostly beauty in the original phrase that neither a free nor yet a precise translation can preserve.

§ 12

Thus, in this home-worship of the Far East, by love the dead are made divine; and the foreknowledge of this tender apotheosis must temper with consolation the natural melancholy of age. Never in Japan are the dead so quickly forgotten as with us: by simple faith they are deemed still to dwell among their beloved; and their place within the home remains ever holy. And the aged patriarch about to pass away knows that loving lips will nightly murmur to the memory of him before the household shrine; that faithful hearts will beseech him in their pain and bless him in their joy; that gentle hands will place before his ihai pure offerings of fruits and flowers, and dainty repasts of the things which he was wont to like; and will pour out for him, into the little cup of ghosts and gods, the fragrant tea of guests or the amber rice-wine. Strange changes are coming upon the land: old customs are vanishing; old beliefs are weakening; the thoughts of to-day will not be the thoughts of another age, – but of all this he knows happily

nothing in his own quaint, simple, beautiful Izumo. He dreams that for him, as for his fathers, the little lamp will burn on through the generations; he sees, in softest fancy, the yet unborn – the children of his children's children – clapping their tiny hands in Shintō prayer, and making filial obeisance before the little dusty tablet that bears his unforgotten name.

CHAPTER THREE

Of Women's Hair

*

§ 1

THE hair of the younger daughter of the family is very long; and it is a spectacle of no small interest to see it dressed. It is dressed once in every three days; and the operation, which costs four sen, is acknowledged to require one hour. As a matter of fact it requires nearly two. The hairdresser (*kamiyui*) first sends her maiden apprentice, who cleans the hair, washes it, perfumes it, and combs it with extraordinary combs of at least five different kinds. So thoroughly is the hair cleansed that it remains for three days, or even four, immaculate beyond our Occidental conception of things. In the morning, during the dusting time, it is carefully covered with a handkerchief or a little blue towel; and the curious Japanese wooden pillow, which supports the neck, not the head, renders it possible to sleep at ease without disarranging the marvellous structure.[1]

After the apprentice has finished her part of the work, the hairdresser herself appears, and begins to build the coiffure. For this task she uses, besides the extraordinary variety of combs, fine loops of gilt thread or coloured paper twine, dainty bits of deliciously tinted crape-silk, delicate steel springs, and curious little basket-shaped things over which the hair is moulded into the required forms before being fixed in place.

The kamiyui also brings razors with her; for the Japanese girl is shaved, – cheeks, ears, brows, chin, even nose! What is

[1] Formerly both sexes used the same pillow for the same reason. The long hair of a samurai youth, tied up in an elaborate knot, required much time to arrange. Since it has become the almost universal custom to wear the hair short, the men have adopted a pillow shaped like a small bolster.

there to shave? Only that peachy floss which is the velvet of the finest human skin, but which Japanese taste removes. There is, however, another use for the razor. All maidens bear the signs of their maidenhood in the form of a little round spot, about an inch in diameter, shaven clean upon the very top of the head. This is only partially concealed by a band of hair brought back from the forehead across it, and fastened to the back hair. The girl-baby's head is totally shaved. When a few years old the little creature's hair is allowed to grow except at the top of the head, where a large tonsure is maintained. But the size of the tonsure diminishes year by year, until it shrinks after childhood to the small spot above described; and this, too, vanishes after marriage, when a still more complicated fashion of wearing the hair is adopted.

§ 2

Such absolutely straight dark hair as that of most Japanese women might seem, to Occidental ideas at least, ill-suited to the highest possibilities of the art of the *coiffeuse*.[1] But the skill of the kamiyui has made it tractable to every æsthetic whim. Ringlets, indeed, are unknown, and curling irons. But what wonderful and beautiful shapes the hair of the girl is made to assume: volutes, jets, whirls, eddyings, foliations, each passing into the other blandly as a linking of brush-strokes in the writing of a Chinese master! Far beyond the skill of the Parisian *coiffeuse* is the art of the kamiyui. From the mythical

[1] It is an error to suppose that all Japanese have blue-black hair. There are two distinct racial types. In one the hair is a deep brown instead of a pure black, and is also softer and finer. Rarely, but very rarely, one may see a Japanese *chevelure* having a natural tendency to ripple. For curious reasons, which cannot be stated here, an Izumo woman is very much ashamed of having wavy hair, – more ashamed than she would be of a natural deformity.

era[1] of the race, Japanese ingenuity has exhausted itself in the invention and the improvement of pretty devices for the dressing of woman's hair; and probably there have never been so many beautiful fashions of wearing it in any other country as there have been in Japan. These have changed through the centuries; sometimes becoming wondrously intricate of design, sometimes exquisitely simple, – as in that gracious custom, recorded for us in so many quaint drawings, of allowing the long black tresses to flow unconfined below the waist.[2] But every mode of which we have any pictorial record had its own striking charm. Indian, Chinese, Malayan, Korean ideas of beauty found their way to the Land of the Gods, and were appropriated and transfigured by the finer native conceptions of comeliness. Buddhism, too, which so profoundly influenced all Japanese art and thought, may possibly have influenced fashions of wearing the hair; for its female divinities appear with the most beautiful coiffures. Notice the hair of a Kwannon or a Benten, and the tresses of the Tennin, – those angel-maidens who float in azure upon the ceilings of the great temples.

§ 3

The particular attractiveness of the modern styles is the way in which the hair is made to serve as an elaborate nimbus for the features, giving delightful relief to whatever of fairness or sweetness the young face may possess. Then behind this

[1] Even in the time of the writing of the *Kojiki* the art of arranging the hair must have been somewhat developed. See Professor Chamberlain's introduction to translation, p. xxxi.; also vol. i. section ix.; vol. vii. section xii.; vol. ix. section xviii., *et passim.*

[2] An art expert can decide the age of an unsigned kakemono or other work of art in which human figures appear, by the style of the coiffure of the female personages.

charming black aureole is a riddle of graceful loopings and weavings whereof neither the beginning nor the ending can possibly be discerned. Only the kamiyui knows the key to that riddle. And the whole is held in place with curious ornamental combs, and shot through with long fine pins of gold, silver, nacre, transparent tortoise-shell, or lacquered wood, with cunningly carven heads.[1]

§ 4

Not less than fourteen different ways of dressing the hair are practised by the *coiffeuses* of Izumo; but doubtless in the capital, and in some of the larger cities of eastern Japan, the art is much more elaborately developed. The hairdressers (*kamiyui*) go from house to house to exercise their calling, visiting their clients upon fixed days at certain regular hours. The hair of little girls from seven to eight years old is in Matsue dressed usually after the style called O-tabako-bon, unless it be simply 'banged.' In the O-tabako-bon ('honourable smoking-box' style) the hair is cut to the length of about four inches all round except above the forehead, where it is clipped a little shorter; and on the summit of the head it is allowed to grow longer and is gathered up into a peculiarly shaped knot, which justifies the curious name of the coiffure. As soon as the girl becomes old enough to go to a female public day-school, her hair is dressed in the pretty, simple style called katsurashita, or perhaps in the new, ugly, semi-foreign 'bundle-style' called sokuhatsu, which has become the regulation fashion in boarding-schools. For the daughters of the poor, and even for most

[1] The principal and indispensable hair-pin (*kanzashi*), usually about seven inches long, is split, and its well-tempered double shaft can be used like a small pair of chopsticks for picking up small things. The head is terminated by a tiny spoon-shaped projection, which has a special purpose in the Japanese toilette.

of those of the middle classes, the public-school period is rather brief; their studies usually cease a few years before they are marriageable, and girls marry very early in Japan. The maiden's first elaborate coiffure is arranged for her when she reaches the age of fourteen or fifteen, at earliest. From twelve to fourteen her hair is dressed in the fashion called Omoyedzuki; then the style is changed to the beautiful coiffure called jorōwage. There are various forms of this style, more or less complex. A couple of years later, the jorōwage yields place in the turn to the shinjōchō [1] ('new-butterfly' style), or the shimada, also called takawage. The shinjōchō style is common, is worn by women of various ages, and is not considered very genteel. The shimada, exquisitely elaborate, is; but the more respectable the family, the smaller the form of this coiffure; geisha and jorō wear a larger and loftier variety of it, which properly answers to the name takawage, or 'high coiffure.' Between eighteen and twenty years of age the maiden again exchanges this style for another termed Tenjingaeshi; between twenty and twenty-four years of age she adopts the fashion called mitsuwage, or the 'triple coiffure' of three loops; and a somewhat similar but still more complicated coiffure, called mitsuwakudzushi, is worn by young women of from twenty-five to twenty-eight. Up to that age every change in the fashion of wearing the hair has been in the direction of elaborateness and complexity. But after twenty-eight a Japanese woman is no longer considered young, and there is only one more coiffure for her, – the mochiriwage or

[1] The shinjōchō is also called Ichōgaeshi by old people, although the original Ichōgaeshi was somewhat different. The samurai girls used to wear their hair in the true Ichōgaeshi manner; the name is derived from the ichō-tree (*Salisburia andiantifolia*), whose leaves have a queer shape, almost like that of a duck's foot. Certain bands of the hair in this coiffure bore a resemblance in form to ichō-leaves.

bobai, the simple and rather ugly style adopted by old women.

But the girl who marries wears her hair in a fashion quite different from any of the preceding. The most beautiful, the most elaborate, and the most costly of all modes is the bride's coiffure, called hanayome, a word literally signifying 'flower-wife.' The structure is dainty as its name, and must be seen to be artistically appreciated. Afterwards the wife wears her hair in the styles called kumesa or maruwage, another name for which is katsuyama. The kumesa style is not genteel, and is the coiffure of the poor; the maruwage or katsuyama is refined. In former times the samurai women wore their hair in two particular styles: the maiden's coiffure was ichōgaeshi, and that of the married folk katahajishi. It is still possible to see in Matsue a few katahajishi coiffures.

§ 5

The family kamiyui, O-Koto-San, the most skilful of her craft in Izumo, is a little woman of about thirty, still quite attractive. About her neck there are three soft pretty lines, forming what connoisseurs of beauty term 'the necklace of Venus.' This is a rare charm; but it once nearly proved the ruin of Koto. The story is a curious one.

Koto had a rival at the beginning of her professional career, – a woman of considerable skill as a *coiffeuse*, but of malignant disposition, named Jin. Jin gradually lost all her respectable custom, and little Koto became the fashionable hairdresser. But her old rival, filled with jealous hate, invented a wicked story about Koto, and the story found root in the rich soil of old Izumo superstition, and grew fantastically. The idea of it had been suggested to Jin's cunning mind by those three soft lines about Koto's neck. She declared that Koto had a 'NUKE-KUBI.'

What is a nuke-kubi? 'Kubi' signifies either the neck or head. 'Nukeru' means to creep, to skulk, to prowl, to slip away stealthily. To have a nuke-kubi is to have a head that detaches itself from the body, and prowls about at night – by itself.

Koto has been twice married, and her second match was a happy one. But her first husband caused her much trouble, and ran away from her at last, in company with some worthless woman. Nothing was ever heard of him afterward, – so that Jin thought it quite safe to invent a nightmare-story to account for his disappearance. She said that he abandoned Koto because, on awaking one night, he saw his young wife's head rise from the pillow, and her neck lengthen like a great white serpent, while the rest of her body remained motionless. He saw the head, supported by the ever-lengthening neck, enter the farther apartment and drink all the oil in the lamps, and then return to the pillow slowly, – the neck simultaneously contracting. 'Then he rose up and fled away from the house in great fear,' said Jin.

As one story begets another, all sorts of queer rumours soon began to circulate about poor Koto. There was a tale that some police-officer, late at night, saw a woman's head without a body, nibbling fruit from a tree overhanging some garden-wall; and that, knowing it to be a nuke-kubi, he struck it with the flat of his sword. It shrank away as swiftly as a bat flies, but not before he had been able to recognize the face of the kami-yui. 'Oh! it is quite true!' declared Jin, the morning after the alleged occurrence; 'and if you don't believe it, send word to Koto that you want to see her. She can't go out: her face is all swelled up.' Now the last statement was fact, – for Koto had a very severe toothache at that time, – and the fact helped the falsehood. And the story found its way to the local newspaper, which published it – only as a strange example of popular

credulity; and Jin said, 'Am I a teller of the truth? See, the paper has printed it!'

Wherefore crowds of curious people gathered before Koto's little house, and made her life such a burden to her that her husband had to watch her constantly to keep her from killing herself. Fortunately she had good friends in the family of the Governor, where she had been employed for years as *coiffeuse*; and the Governor, hearing of the wickedness, wrote a public denunciation of it, and set his name to it, and printed it. Now the people of Matsue reverenced their old samurai Governor as if he were a god, and believed his least word; and seeing what he had written, they became ashamed, and also denounced the lie and the liar; and the little hairdresser soon became more prosperous than before through popular sympathy.

Some of the most extraordinary beliefs of old days are kept alive in Izumo and elsewhere by what are called in America 'travelling side-shows'; and the inexperienced foreigner could never imagine the possibilities of a Japanese side-show. On certain great holidays the showmen make their appearance, put up their ephemeral theatres of rush-matting and bamboos in some temple court, surfeit expectation by the most incredible surprises, and then vanish as suddenly as they came. The Skeleton of a Devil, the Claws of a Goblin, and 'a Rat as large as a sheep,' were some of the least extraordinary displays which I saw. The Goblin's Claws were remarkably fine shark's teeth; the Devil's Skeleton had belonged to an orang-outang, – all except the horns ingeniously attached to the skull; and the wondrous Rat I discovered to be a tame kangaroo. What I could not fully understand was the exhibition of a nuke-kubi, in which a young woman stretched her neck, apparently, to a length of about two feet, making ghastly faces during the performance.

§ 6

There are also some strange old superstitions about women's hair.

The myth of Medusa has many a counterpart in Japanese folk-lore: the subject of such tales being always some wondrously beautiful girl, whose hair turns to snakes only at night, and who is discovered at last to be either a dragon or a dragon's daughter. But in ancient times it was believed that the hair of any young woman might, under certain trying circumstances, change into serpents. For instance: under the influence of long-repressed jealousy.

There were many men of wealth who, in the days of Old Japan, kept their concubines (*mekaké* or *aishō*) under the same roof with their legitimate wives (*okusama*). And it is told that, although the severest patriarchal discipline might compel the mekaké and the okusama to live together in perfect seeming harmony by day, their secret hate would reveal itself by night in the transformation of their hair. The long black tresses of each would uncoil and hiss and strive to devour those of the other; – and even the mirrors of the sleepers would dash themselves together; – for, saith an ancient proverb, *kagami onna-no tamashii*, – 'a Mirror is the Soul of a Woman.'[1] And there is a famous tradition of one Kato Sayemon Shigenji, who beheld in the night the hair of his wife and the hair of his concubine, changed into vipers, writhing together and hissing and biting. Then Kato Sayemon grieved much for that secret bitterness of hatred which thus existed through his fault; and

[1] The old Japanese mirrors were made of metal, and were extremely beautiful. *Kagami ga kumoru to tamashii ga kumoru* ('When the Mirror is dim, the Soul is unclean') is another curious proverb relating to mirrors. Perhaps the most beautiful and touching story of a mirror in any language is that called *Matsuyama-no-kagami*, which has been translated by Mrs. James.

he shaved his head and became a priest in the great Buddhist monastery of Koya-San, where he dwelt until the day of his death under the name of Karukaya.

§ 7

The hair of dead women is arranged in the manner called tabanegami, somewhat resembling the shimada extremely simplified, and without ornaments of any kind. The name tabanegami signifies hair tied into a bunch, like a sheaf of rice. This style must also be worn by women during the period of mourning.

Ghosts, nevertheless, are represented with hair loose and long, falling weirdly over the face. And no doubt because of the melancholy suggestiveness of its drooping branches, the willow is believed to be the favourite tree of ghosts. Thereunder, 'tis said, they mourn in the night, mingling their shadowy hair with the long dishevelled tresses of the tree.

Tradition says that Ōkyo Maruyama was the first Japanese artist who drew a ghost. The Shōgun, having invited him to his palace, said: 'Make a picture of a ghost for me.' Ōkyo promised to do so; but he was puzzled how to execute the order satisfactorily. A few days later, hearing that one of his aunts was very ill, he visited her. She was so emaciated that she looked like one already long dead. As he watched by her bedside, a ghastly inspiration came to him: he drew the fleshless face and long dishevelled hair, and created from that hasty sketch a ghost that surpassed all the Shōgun's expectations. Afterwards Ōkyo became very famous as a painter of ghosts.

Japanese ghosts are always represented as diaphanous, and preternaturally tall, – only the upper part of the figure being distinctly outlined, and the lower part fading utterly away. As the Japanese say, 'a ghost has no feet': its appearance is like an exhalation, which becomes visible only at a certain distance

above the ground; and it wavers and lengthens and undulates in the conceptions of artists, like a vapour moved by wind. Occasionally phantom women figure in picture-books in the likeness of living women; but these are not true ghosts. They are fox-women or other goblins; and their supernatural character is suggested by a peculiar expression of the eyes and a certain impossible elfish grace.

Little children in Japan, like little children in all countries, keenly enjoy the pleasure of fear; and they have many games in which such pleasure forms the chief attraction. Among these is O-bake-goto, or Ghost-play. Some nurse-girl or elder sister loosens her hair in front, so as to let it fall over her face, and pursues the little folk with moans and weird gestures, miming all the attitudes of the ghosts of the picture-books.

§ 8

As the hair of the Japanese woman is her richest ornament, it is of all her possessions that which she would most suffer to lose; and in other days the man too manly to kill an erring wife deemed it vengeance enough to turn her away with all her hair shorn off. Only the greatest faith or the deepest love can prompt a woman to the voluntary sacrifice of her entire *chevelure*, though partial sacrifices, offerings of one or two long thick cuttings, may be seen suspended before many an Izumo shrine.

What faith can do in the way of such sacrifice, he best knows who has seen the great cables, woven of women's hair, that hang in the vast Hongwanji temple at Kyōto. And love is stronger than faith, though much less demonstrative. According to ancient custom a wife bereaved sacrifices a portion of her hair to be placed in the coffin of her husband, and buried with him. The quantity is not fixed: in the majority of cases it is very small, so that the appearance of the coiffure is thereby

nowise affected. But she who resolves to remain for ever loyal to the memory of the lost yields up all. With her own hand she cuts off her hair, and lays the whole glossy sacrifice – emblem of her youth and beauty – upon the knees of the dead.

It is never suffered to grow again.

CHAPTER FOUR

From the Diary of an English Teacher

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§ 1

MATSUE, *September* 2, 1890.

I AM under contract to serve as English teacher in the Jinjō Chūgakkō, or Ordinary Middle School, and also in the Shihan-Gakkō, or Normal School, of Matsue, Izumo, for the term of one year.

The Jinjō Chūgakkō is an immense two-story wooden building in European style, painted a dark grey-blue. It has accommodations for nearly three hundred day scholars. It is situated in one corner of a great square of ground, bounded on two sides by canals, and on the other two by very quiet streets. This site is very near the ancient castle.

The Normal School is a much larger building occupying the opposite angle of the square. It is also much handsomer, is painted snowy white, and has a little cupola upon its summit. There are only about one hundred and fifty students in the Shihan-Gakkō, but they are boarders.

Between these two schools are other educational buildings, which I shall learn more about later.

It is my first day at the schools. Nishida Sentaro, the Japanese teacher of English, has taken me through the buildings, introduced me to the Directors, and to all my future colleagues, given me all necessary instructions about hours and about textbooks, and furnished my desk with all things necessary. Before teaching begins, however, I must be introduced to the Governor of the Province, Koteda Yasusada, with whom my contract has been made, through the medium of his secretary. So Nishida leads the way to the Kenchō, or Prefectural office, situated in another foreign-looking edifice across the street.

We enter it, ascend a wide stairway, and enter a spacious room carpeted in European fashion, – a room with bay windows and cushioned chairs. One person is seated at a small round table, and about him are standing half a dozen others: all are in full Japanese costume, ceremonial costume, – splendid silken hakama, or Chinese trousers, silken robes, silken haori or overdress, marked with their mon or family crests: rich and dignified attire which makes me ashamed of my commonplace Western garb. These are officials of the Kenchō, and teachers: the person seated is the Governor. He rises to greet me, gives me the hand-grasp of a giant: and as I look into his eyes, I feel I shall love that man to the day of my death. A face fresh and frank as a boy's, expressing much placid force and large-hearted kindness, – all the calm of a Buddha. Beside him, the other officials look very small: indeed the first impression of him is that of a man of another race. While I am wondering whether the old Japanese heroes were cast in a similar mould, he signs to me to take a seat, and questions my guide in a mellow basso. There is a charm in the fluent depth of the voice pleasantly confirming the idea suggested by the face. An attendant brings tea.

'The Governor asks,' interprets Nishida, 'if you know the old history of Izumo.'

I reply that I have read the *Kojiki*, translated by Professor Chamberlain, and have therefore some knowledge of the story of Japan's most ancient province. Some converse in Japanese follows. Nishida tells the Governor that I came to Japan to study the ancient religion and customs, and that I am particularly interested in Shintō and the traditions of Izumo. The Governor suggests that I make visits to the celebrated shrines of Kitzuki, Yaegaki, and Kumano, and then asks:

'Does he know the tradition of the origin of the clapping of hands before a Shintō shrine?'

I reply in the negative; and the Governor says the tradition is given in a commentary upon the *Kojiki*.

'It is in the thirty-second section of the fourteenth volume, where it is written that Ya-he-Koto-Shiro-nushi-no-Kami clapped his hands.'

I thank the Governor for his kind suggestions and his citation. After a brief silence I am graciously dismissed with another genuine hand-grasp; and we return to the school.

§ 2

I have been teaching for three hours in the Middle School, and teaching Japanese boys turns out to be a much more agreeable task than I had imagined. Each class has been so well prepared for me beforehand by Nishida that my utter ignorance of Japanese makes no difficulty in regard to teaching: moreover, although the lads cannot understand my words always when I speak, they can understand whatever I write upon the blackboard with chalk. Most of them have already been studying English from childhood, with Japanese teachers. All are wonderfully docile and patient. According to old custom, when the teacher enters, the whole class rises and bows to him. He returns the bow, and calls the roll.

Nishida is only too kind. He helps me in every way he possibly can, and is constantly regretting that he cannot help me more. There are, of course, some difficulties to overcome. For instance, it will take me a very, very long time to learn the names of the boys, – most of which names I cannot even pronounce, with the class-roll before me. And although the names of the different classes have been painted upon the doors of their respective rooms in English letters, for the benefit of the foreign teacher, it will take me some weeks at least to become quite familiar with them. For the time being Nishida always guides me to the rooms. He also shows me the way, through

long corridors, to the Normal School, and introduces me to the teacher Nakayama who is to act there as my guide.

I have been engaged to teach only four times a week at the Normal School; but I am furnished there also with a handsome desk in the teachers' apartment, and am made to feel at home almost immediately. Nakayama shows me everything of interest in the building before introducing me to my future pupils. The introduction is pleasant and novel as a school experience. I am conducted along a corridor, and ushered into a large luminous whitewashed room full of young men in dark blue military uniform. Each sits at a very small desk, supported by a single leg, with three feet. At the end of the room is a platform with a high desk and a chair for the teacher. As I take my place at the desk, a voice rings out in English: '*Stand up!*' And all rise with a springy movement as if moved by machinery. '*Bow down!*' the same voice again commands, – the voice of a young student wearing a captain's stripes upon his sleeve; and all salute me. I bow in return; we take our seats; and the lesson begins.

All teachers at the Normal School are saluted in the same military fashion before each class-hour, – only the command is given in Japanese. For my sake only, it is given in English.

§ 3

September 22, 1890.

The Normal School is a State institution. Students are admitted upon examination and production of testimony as to good character; but the number is, of course, limited. The young men pay no fees, no boarding money, nothing even for books, college-outfits, or wearing apparel. They are lodged, clothed, fed, and educated by the State; but they are required in return, after their graduation, to serve the State as teachers for the space of five years. Admission, however, by no means

assures graduation. There are three or four examinations each year; and the students who fail to obtain a certain high average of examination marks must leave the school, however exemplary their conduct or earnest their study. No leniency can be shown where the educational needs of the State are concerned, and these call for natural ability and a high standard of its proof.

The discipline is military and severe. Indeed, it is so thorough that the graduate of a Normal School is exempted by military law from more than a year's service in the army: he leaves college a trained soldier. Deportment is also a requisite: special marks are given for it; and however gawky a freshman may prove at the time of his admission, he cannot remain so. A spirit of manliness is cultivated, which excludes roughness but develops self-reliance and self-control. The student is required, when speaking, to look his teacher in the face, and to utter his words not only distinctly, but sonorously. Demeanour in class is partly enforced by the class-room fittings themselves. The tiny tables are too narrow to allow of being used as supports for the elbows; the seats have no backs against which to lean, and the student must hold himself rigidly erect as he studies. He must also keep himself faultlessly neat and clean. Whenever and wherever he encounters one of his teachers he must halt, bring his feet together, draw himself erect, and give the military salute. And this is done with a swift grace difficult to describe.

The demeanour of a class during study hours is if anything too faultless. Never a whisper is heard; never is a head raised from the book without permission. But when the teacher addresses a student by name, the youth rises instantly, and replies in a tone of such vigour as would seem to unaccustomed ears almost startling by contrast with the stillness and self-repression of the others.

The female department of the Normal School, where about fifty young women are being trained as teachers, is a separate two-story quadrangle of buildings, large, airy, and so situated, together with its gardens, as to be totally isolated from all other buildings and invisible from the street. The girls are not only taught European science by the most advanced methods, but are trained as well in Japanese arts, – the arts of embroidery, of decoration, of painting, and of arranging flowers. European drawing is also taught, and beautifully taught, not only here, but in all the schools. It is taught, however, in combination with Japanese methods; and the results of this blending may certainly be expected to have some charming influence upon future art-production. The average capacity of the Japanese student in drawing is, I think, at least fifty per cent. higher than that of European students. The soul of the race is essentially artistic; and the extremely difficult art of learning to write the Chinese characters, in which all are trained from early childhood, has already disciplined the hand and the eye to a marvellous degree, – a degree undreamed of in the Occident, – long before the drawing-master begins his lessons of perspective.

Attached to the great Normal School, and connected by a corridor with the Jinjō Chūgakkō likewise, is a large elementary school for little boys and girls: its teachers are male and female students of the graduating classes, who are thus practically trained for their profession before entering the service of the State. Nothing could be more interesting as an educational spectacle to any sympathetic foreigner than some of this elementary teaching. In the first room which I visit a class of very little girls and boys – some as quaintly pretty as their own dolls – are bending at their desks over sheets of coal-black paper which you would think they were trying to make still

blacker by energetic use of writing-brushes and what we call Indian-ink. They are really learning to write Chinese and Japanese characters, stroke by stroke. Until one stroke has been well learned, they are not suffered to attempt another – much less a combination. Long before the first lesson is thoroughly mastered, the white paper has become all evenly black under the multitude of tyro brush-strokes. But the same sheet is still used; for the wet ink makes a yet blacker mark upon the dry, so that it can easily be seen.

In a room adjoining, I see another child-class learning to use scissors – Japanese scissors, which, being formed in one piece, shaped something like the letter U, are much less easy to manage than ours. The little folk are being taught to cut out patterns, and shapes of special objects or symbols to be studied. Flower-forms are the most ordinary patterns; sometimes certain ideographs are given as subjects.

And in another room a third small class is learning to sing; the teacher writing the music notes (*do*, *re*, *mi*) with chalk upon a blackboard, and accompanying the song with an accordion. The little ones have learned the Japanese national anthem (*Kimi ga yo wa*) and two native songs set to Scotch airs, – one of which calls back to me, even in this remote corner of the Orient, many a charming memory: *Auld Lang Syne*.

No uniform is worn in this elementary school: all are in Japanese dress, – the boys in dark blue kimono, the little girls in robes of all tints, radiant as butterflies. But in addition to their robes, the girls wear hakama,[1] and these are of a vivid, warm sky-blue.

Between the hours of teaching, ten minutes are allowed for play or rest. The little boys play at Demon-Shadows or at blindman's-buff or at some other funny game: they laugh,

[1] There is a legend that the Sun-Goddess invented the first hakama, by tying together the skirts of her robe.

leap, shout, race, and wrestle, but, unlike European children, never quarrel or fight.[1] As for the little girls, they get by themselves, and either play at hand-ball, or form into circles to play at some round game, accompanied by song. Indescribably soft and sweet the chorus of those little voices in the round:

Kango-kango shō-ya,
Naka yoni shō-ya,
Don-don to kunde
Jizō-San no midzu wo
Matsuba no midzu irete,
Makkuri kaéso.[2]

I notice that the young men, as well as the young women, who teach these little folk, are extremely tender to their charges. A child whose kimono is out of order, or dirtied by play, is taken aside and brushed and arranged as carefully as by an elder brother.

Besides being trained for their future profession by teaching the children of the elementary school, the girl students of the Shihan-Gakkō are also trained to teach in the neighbouring kindergarten. A delightful kindergarten it is, with big cheerful sunny rooms, where stocks of the most ingenious educational toys are piled upon shelves for daily use.

[1] Since the above was written I have had two years' experience as a teacher in various large Japanese schools; and I have never had personal knowledge of any serious quarrel between students, and have never even heard of a fight among my pupils. And I have taught some eight hundred boys and young men.

[2] 'Let us play the game called kango-kango. Plenteously the water of Jizō-San quickly draw, – and pour on the pine-leaves, – and turn back again.' Many of the games of Japanese children, like many of their toys, have a Buddhist origin, or at least a Buddhist significance.

§ 4

October 1, 1890.

Nevertheless I am destined to see little of the Normal School. Strictly speaking, I do not belong to its staff: my services being only lent by the Middle School, to which I give most of my time. I see the Normal School students in their class-rooms only, for they are not allowed to go out to visit their teachers' homes in the town. So I can never hope to become as familiar with them as with the students of the Chūgakkō, who are beginning to call me 'Teacher' instead of 'Sir,' and to treat me as a sort of elder brother. (I objected to the word 'master,' for in Japan the teacher has no need of being masterful.) And I feel less at home in the large, bright, comfortable apartments of the Normal School teachers than in our dingy, chilly teachers' room at the Chūgakkō, where my desk is next to that of Nishida.

On the walls there are maps, crowded with Japanese ideographs; a few large charts representing zoological facts in the light of evolutional science; and an immense frame filled with little black lacquered wooden tablets, so neatly fitted together that the entire surface is uniform as that of a blackboard. On these are written, or rather painted, in white, names of teachers, subjects, classes, and order of teaching hours; and by the ingenious tablet arrangement any change of hours can be represented by simply changing the places of the tablets. As all this is written in Chinese and Japanese characters, it remains to me a mystery, except in so far as the general plan and purpose are concerned. I have learned only to recognize the letters of my own name, and the simpler form of numerals.

On every teacher's desk there is a small hibachi of glazed blue-and-white ware, containing a few lumps of glowing charcoal in a bed of ashes. During the brief intervals between

classes each teacher smokes his tiny Japanese pipe of brass, iron, or silver. The hibachi and a cup of hot tea are our consolations for the fatigues of the class-room.

Nishida and one or two other teachers know a good deal of English, and we chat together sometimes between classes. But more often no one speaks. All are tired after the teaching hour, and prefer to smoke in silence. At such times the only sounds within the room are the ticking of the clock, and the sharp clang of the little pipes being rapped upon the edges of the hibachi to empty out the ashes.

§ 5

October 15, 1890.

To-day I witnessed the annual athletic contests (*undō-kwai*) of all the schools in Shimane Ken. These games were celebrated in the broad castle grounds of Ninomaru. Yesterday a circular race-track had been staked off, hurdles erected for leaping, thousands of wooden seats prepared for invited or privileged spectators, and a grand lodge built for the Governor, all before sunset. The place looked like a vast circus, with its tiers of plank seats rising one above the other, and the Governor's lodge magnificent with wreaths and flags. School children from all the villages and towns within twenty-five miles had arrived in surprising multitude. Nearly six thousand boys and girls were entered to take part in the contests. Their parents and relatives and teachers made an imposing assembly upon the benches and within the gates. And on the ramparts overlooking the huge inclosure a much larger crowd had gathered, representing perhaps one-third of the population of the city.

The signal to begin or to end a contest was a pistol-shot. Four different kinds of games were performed in different parts of the grounds at the same time, as there was room enough

for an army; and prizes were awarded to the winners of each contest by the hand of the Governor himself.

There were races between the best runners in each class of the different schools; and the best runner of all proved to be Sakane, of our own fifth class, who came in first by nearly forty yards without seeming even to make an effort. He is our champion athlete, and as good as he is strong. – so that it made me very happy to see him with his arms full of prize books. He won also a fencing contest decided by the breaking of a little earthenware saucer tied to the left arm of each combatant. And he also won a leaping match between our older boys.

But many hundreds of other winners there were too, and many hundreds of prizes were given away. There were races in which the runners were tied together in pairs, the left leg of one to the right leg of the other. There were equally funny races, the winning of which depended on the runner's ability not only to run, but to crawl, to climb, to vault, and to jump alternately. There were races also for the little girls, – pretty as butterflies they seemed in their sky-blue hakama and many coloured robes, – races in which the contestants had each to pick up as they ran three balls of three different colours out of a number scattered over the turf. Besides this, the little girls had what is called a flag-race, and a contest with battledores and shuttlecocks.

Then came the tug-of-war. A magnificent tug-of-war, too, – one hundred students at one end of a rope, and another hundred at the other. But the most wonderful spectacles of the day were the dumb-bell exercises. Six thousand boys and girls, massed in ranks about five hundred deep; six thousand pairs of arms rising and falling exactly together; six thousand pairs of sandalled feet advancing or retreating together, at the signal of the masters of gymnastics, directing all from the tops of various little wooden towers; six thousand voices chanting at

once the 'one, two, three,' of the dumb-bell drill: '*Ichi, ni, – san, shi, – go, roku, – shichi, hachi.*'

Last came the curious game called 'Taking the Castle.' Two models of Japanese towers, about fifteen feet high, made with paper stretched over a framework of bamboo, were set up, one at each end of the field. Inside the castles an inflammable liquid had been placed in open vessels, so that if the vessels were overturned the whole fabric would take fire. The boys, divided into two parties, bombarded the castles with wooden balls, which passed easily through the paper walls; and in a short time both models were making a glorious blaze. Of course the party whose castle was the first to blaze lost the game.

The games began at eight o'clock in the morning, and at five in the evening came to an end. Then at a signal fully ten thousand voices pealed out the superb national anthem, '*Kimi ga yo*,' and concluded it with three cheers for their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan.

The Japanese do not shout or roar as we do when we cheer. They chant. Each long cry is like the opening tone of an immense musical chorus: *A-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a!*

§ 6

It is no small surprise to observe how botany, geology, and other sciences are daily taught even in this remotest part of Old Japan. Plant physiology and the nature of vegetable tissues are studied under excellent microscopes, and in their relations to chemistry; and at regular intervals the instructor leads his classes into the country to illustrate the lessons of the term by examples taken from the flora of their native place. Agriculture, taught by a graduate of the famous Agricultural School at Sapporo, is practically illustrated upon farms purchased and maintained by the schools for purely educational ends. Each

series of lessons in geology is supplemented by visits to the mountains about the lake, or to the tremendous cliffs of the coast, where the students are taught to familiarize themselves with forms of stratification and the visible history of rocks. The basin of the lake, and the country about Matsue, is physiographically studied, after the plans of instruction laid down in Huxley's excellent manual. Natural History, too, is taught according to the latest and best methods, and with the help of the microscope. The results of such teaching are sometimes surprising. I know of one student, a lad of only sixteen, who voluntarily collected and classified more than two hundred varieties of marine plants for a Tōkyō professor. Another, a youth of seventeen, wrote down for me in my notebook, without a work of reference at hand, and, as I afterwards discovered, almost without an omission or error, a scientific list of all the butterflies to be found in the neighbourhood of the city.

§ 7

Through the Minister of Public Instruction, His Imperial Majesty has sent to all the great public schools of the Empire a letter bearing date of the thirteenth day of the tenth month of the twenty-third year of Meiji. And the students and teachers of the various schools assemble to hear the reading of the Imperial Words on Education.

At eight o'clock we of the Middle School are all waiting in our own assembly hall for the coming of the Governor, who will read the Emperor's letter in the various schools.

We wait but a little while. Then the Governor comes with all the officers of the Kenchō and the chief men of the city. We rise to salute him: then the national anthem is sung.

Then the Governor, ascending the platform, produces the Imperial Missive, – a scroll of Chinese manuscript sheathed in silk. He withdraws it slowly from its woven envelope, lifts it

reverentially to his forehead, unrolls it, lifts it again to his forehead, and after a moment's dignified pause begins in that clear deep voice of his to read the melodious syllables after the ancient way, which is like a chant:

'*CHO-KU-GU. Chin omommiru ni waga kōso kosō kuni wo....*

'We consider that the Founder of Our Empire and the ancestors of Our Imperial House placed the foundation of the country on a grand and permanent basis, and established their authority on the principles of profound humanity and benevolence.

'That Our subjects have throughout ages deserved well of the State by their loyalty and piety and by their harmonious co-operation is in accordance with the essential character of Our nation; and on these very same principles Our education has been founded.

'You, Our subjects, be therefore filial to your parents; be affectionate to your brothers; be harmonious as husbands and wives; and be faithful to your friends; conduct yourselves with propriety and carefulness; extend generosity and benevolence towards your neighbours; attend to your studies and follow your pursuits; cultivate your intellects and elevate your morals; advance public benefits and promote social interests; be always found in the good observance of the laws and constitution of the land; display your personal courage and public spirit for the sake of the country whenever required; and thus support the Imperial prerogative, which is coexistent with the Heavens and the Earth.

'Such conduct on your part will not only strengthen the character of Our good and loyal subjects, but conduce also to the maintenance of the fame of your worthy forefathers.

'This is the instruction bequeathed by Our ancestors and to be followed by Our subjects; for it is the truth which has

guided and guides them in their own affairs and in their dealings towards aliens.

'We hope, therefore, We and Our subjects will regard these sacred precepts with one and the same heart in order to attain the same ends.'[1]

Then the Governor and the Head-master speak a few words, – dwelling upon the full significance of His Imperial Majesty's august commands, and exhorting all to remember and to obey them to the uttermost.

After which the students have a holiday, to enable them the better to recollect what they have heard.

§ 8

All teaching in the modern Japanese system of education is conducted with the utmost kindness and gentleness. The teacher is a teacher only: he is not, in the English sense of mastery, a master. He stands to his pupils in the relation of an elder brother. He never tries to impose his will upon them: he never scolds, he seldom criticizes, he scarcely ever punishes. No Japanese teacher ever strikes a pupil: such an act would cost him his post at once. He never loses his temper: to do so would disgrace him in the eyes of his boys and in the judgment of his colleagues. Practically speaking, there is no punishment in Japanese schools. Sometimes very mischievous lads are kept in the schoolhouse during recreation time; yet even this

[1] I take the above translation from a Tōkyō educational journal, entitled *The Museum*. The original document, however, was impressive to a degree that perhaps no translation could give. The Chinese words by which the Emperor refers to himself and his will are far more impressive than our Western 'We' or 'Our;' and the words relating to duties, virtues, wisdom, and other matters are words that evoke in a Japanese mind ideas which only those who know Japanese life perfectly can appreciate, and which, though variant from our own, are neither less beautiful nor less sacred.

light penalty is not inflicted directly by the teacher, but by the director of the school on complaint of the teacher. The purpose in such cases is not to inflict pain by deprivation of enjoyment, but to give public illustration of a fault; and in the great majority of instances, consciousness of the fault thus brought home to a lad before his comrades is quite enough to prevent its repetition. No such cruel punition as that of forcing a dull pupil to learn an additional task, or of sentencing him to strain his eyes copying four or five hundred lines, is ever dreamed of. Nor would such forms of punishment, in the present state of things, be long tolerated by the pupils themselves. The general policy of the educational authorities everywhere throughout the empire is to get rid of students who cannot be perfectly well managed without punishment; and expulsions, nevertheless, are rare.

I often see a pretty spectacle on my way home from the school, when I take the short cut through the castle grounds. A class of about thirty little boys, in kimono and sandals, bareheaded, being taught to march and to sing by a handsome young teacher, also in Japanese dress. While they sing, they are drawn up in line; and keep time with their little bare feet. The teacher has a pleasant high clear tenor: he stands at one end of the rank and sings a single line of the song. Then all the children sing it after him. Then he sings a second line, and they repeat it. If any mistakes are made, they have to sing the verse again.

It is the Song of Kusunoki Masashigé, noblest of Japanese heroes and patriots.

§ 9

I have said that severity on the part of teachers would scarcely be tolerated by the students themselves, – a fact

which may sound strange to English or American ears. Tom Brown's school does not exist in Japan; the ordinary public school much more resembles the ideal Italian institution so charmingly painted for us in the *Cuoré* of De Amicis. Japanese students furthermore claim and enjoy an independence contrary to all Occidental ideas of disciplinary necessity. In the Occident the master expels the pupil. In Japan it happens quite as often that the pupil expels the master. Each public school is an earnest, spirited little republic, to which director and teachers stand only in the relation of president and cabinet. They are indeed appointed by the prefectural government upon recommendation by the Educational Bureau at the capital; but in actual practice they maintain their positions by virtue of their capacity and personal character as estimated by their students, and are likely to be deposed by a revolutionary movement whenever found wanting. It has been alleged that the students frequently abuse their power. But this allegation has been made by European residents, strongly prejudiced in favour of masterful English ways of discipline. (I recollect that an English Yokohama paper, in this connection, advocated the introduction of the birch.) My own observations have convinced me, as larger experience has convinced some others, that in most instances of pupils rebelling against a teacher, reason is upon their side. They will rarely insult a teacher whom they dislike, or cause any disturbance in his class: they will simply refuse to attend school until he be removed. Personal feeling may often be a secondary, but it is seldom, so far as I have been able to learn, the primary cause for such a demand. A teacher whose manners are unsympathetic, or even positively disagreeable, will be nevertheless obeyed and revered while his students remain persuaded of his capacity as a teacher, and his sense of justice; and they are as keen to discern ability as they are to detect partiality. And, on the other hand,

an amiable disposition alone will never atone with them either for want of knowledge or for want of skill to impart it. I knew one case, in a neighbouring public school, of a demand by the students for the removal of their professor of chemistry. In making their complaint, they frankly declared: 'We like him. He is kind to all of us; he does the best he can. But he does not know enough to teach us as we wish to be taught. He cannot answer our questions. He cannot explain the experiments which he shows us. Our former teacher could do all these things. We must have another teacher.' Investigation proved that the lads were quite right. The young teacher had graduated at the university; he had come well recommended: but he had no thorough knowledge of the science which he undertook to impart, and no experience as a teacher. The instructor's success in Japan is not guaranteed by a degree, but by his *practical* knowledge and his capacity to communicate it simply and thoroughly.

§ 10

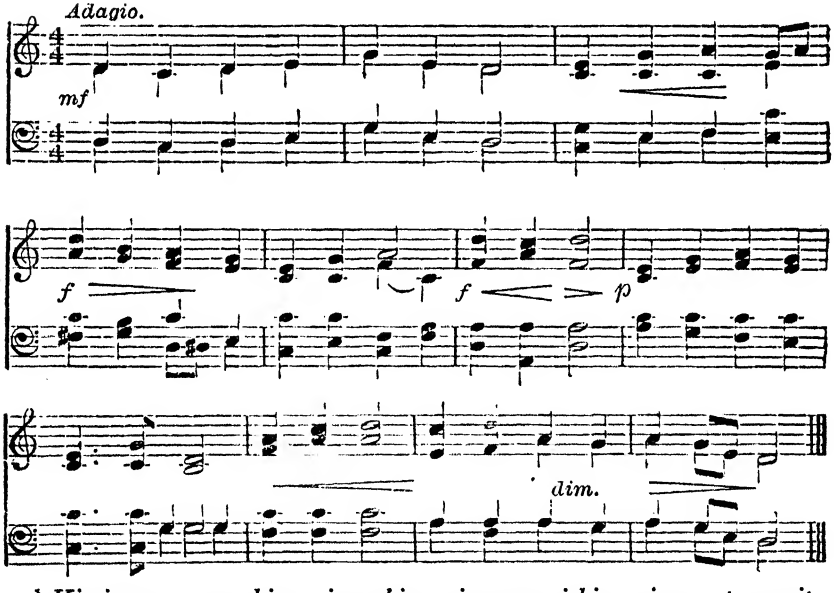
November 3, 1890.

To-day is the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor. It is a public holiday throughout Japan; and there will be no teaching this morning. But at eight o'clock all the students and instructors enter the great assembly hall of the Jinjō Chūgakkō to honour the anniversary of His Majesty's august birth.

On the platform of the assembly hall a table, covered with dark silk, has been placed; and upon this table the portraits of Their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and the Empress of Japan, stand side by side upright, framed in gold. The alcove above the platform has been decorated with flags and wreaths.

Presently the Governor enters, looking like a French general in his gold-embroidered uniform of office, and followed by the Mayor of the city, the Chief Military Officer, the Chief of

Police, and all the officials of the provincial government. These take their places in silence to left and right of the platform. Then the school organ suddenly rolls out the slow, solemn, beautiful national anthem; and all present chant those ancient syllables, made sacred by the reverential love of a century of generations:

Ki-mi ga-a yo-o wa
Chi-yo ni-i-i ya-chi-yo ni sa-za-ré
I-shi no
I-wa o to na-ri-te
Ko-ke no
Mu-u su-u ma-a-a-dé.[1]

[1] *Kimi ga yo wa chiyo ni yachiyo ni sazare ishi no iwa o to narite oke no musu made.* Freely translated: 'May Our Gracious Sovereign reign a thousand years, – reign ten thousand thousand years, – reign till the little stone grow into a mighty rock, thick-velveted with ancient moss!'

The anthem ceases. The Governor advances with a slow dignified step from the right side of the apartment to the centre of the open space before the platform and the portraits of Their Majesties, turns his face to them, and bows profoundly. Then he takes three steps forward toward the platform, and halts, and bows again. Then he takes three more steps forward, and bows still more profoundly. Then he retires, walking backward six steps, and bows once more. Then he returns to his place.

After this the teachers, by parties of six, perform the same beautiful ceremony. When all have saluted the portrait of His Imperial Majesty, the Governor ascends the platform and makes a few eloquent remarks to the students about their duty to their Emperor, to their country, and to their teachers. Then the anthem is sung again; and all disperse to amuse themselves for the rest of the day.

§ II

March 1, 1891.

The majority of the students of the Jinjō Chūgakkō are day-scholars only (*externes*, as we would say in France): they go to school in the morning, take their noon meal at home, and return at one o'clock to attend the brief afternoon classes. All the city students live with their own families; but there are many boys from remote country districts who have no city relatives, and for such the school furnishes boarding-houses, where a wholesome moral discipline is maintained by special masters. They are free, however, if they have sufficient means, to choose another boarding-house (provided it be a respectable one), or to find quarters in some good family; but few adopt either course.

I doubt whether in any other country the cost of education – education of the most excellent and advanced kind – is so little

as in Japan. The Izumo student is able to live at a figure so far below the Occidental idea of necessary expenditure that the mere statement of it can scarcely fail to surprise the reader. A sum equal in American money to about twenty dollars supplies him with board and lodging *for one year*. The whole of his expenses, including school fees, are about seven dollars a month. For his room and three ample meals a day he pays every four weeks only one yen eighty-five sen, – not much more than a dollar and a half in American currency. If very, very poor, he will not be obliged to wear a uniform; but nearly all students of the higher classes do wear uniforms, as the cost of a complete uniform, including cap and shoes of leather, is only about three and a half yen for the cheaper quality. Those who do not wear leather shoes, however, are required, while in the school, to exchange their noisy wooden geta for zori or light straw sandals.

§ 12

But the mental education so admirably imparted in an ordinary middle school is not, after all, so cheaply acquired by the student as might be imagined from the cost of living and the low rate of school fees. For Nature exacts a heavier school fee, and rigidly collects her debt – in human life.

To understand why, one should remember that the modern knowledge which the modern Izumo student must acquire upon a diet of boiled rice and bean-curd was discovered, developed, and synthetized by minds strengthened upon a costly diet of flesh. National underfeeding offers the most cruel problem which the educators of Japan must solve in order that she may become fully able to assimilate the civilization we have thrust upon her. As Herbert Spencer has pointed out, the degree of human energy, physical or intellectual, must depend upon the nutritiveness of food; and history shows that

the well-fed races have been the energetic and the dominant. Perhaps mind will rule in the future of nations; but mind is a mode of force, and must be fed – through the stomach. The thoughts that have shaken the world were never framed upon bread and water: they were created by beefsteak and mutton-chops, by ham and eggs, by pork and puddings, and were stimulated by generous wines, strong ales, and strong coffee. And science also teaches us that the growing child or youth requires an even more nutritious diet than the adult; and that the student especially needs strong nourishment to repair the physical waste involved by brain-exertion.

And what is the waste entailed upon the Japanese school-boy's system by study? It is certainly greater than that which the system of the European or American student must suffer at the same period of life. Seven years of study are required to give the Japanese youth merely the necessary knowledge of his own triple system of ideographs, – or, in less accurate but plainer speech, the enormous alphabet of his native literature. That literature, also, he must study, and the art of two forms of his language, – the written and the spoken: likewise, of course, he must learn native history and native morals. Besides these Oriental studies, his course includes foreign history, geography, arithmetic, astronomy, physics, geometry, natural history, agriculture, chemistry, drawing, and mathematics. Worst of all, he must learn English, – a language of which the difficulty to the Japanese cannot be even faintly imagined by anyone unfamiliar with the construction of the native tongue, – a language so different from his own that the very simplest Japanese phrase cannot be intelligibly rendered into English by a literal translation of the words or even the form of the thought. And he must learn all this upon a diet no English boy could live on; and always thinly clad in his poor cotton dress without even a fire in his schoolroom during the terrible winter, only a hibachi

containing a few lumps of glowing charcoal in a bed of ashes.[1] Is it to be wondered at that even those Japanese students who pass successfully through all the educational courses the Empire can open to them can only in rare instances show results of their long training as large as those manifested by students of the West? Better conditions are coming; but at present, under the new strain, young bodies and young minds too often give way. And those who break down are not the dullards, but the pride of schools, the captains of classes.

§ 13

Yet, so far as the finances of the schools allow, everything possible is done to make the students both healthy and happy, – to furnish them with ample opportunities both for physical exercise and for mental enjoyment. Though the course of study is severe, the hours are not long: and one of the daily five is devoted to military drill, – made more interesting to the lads by the use of real rifles and bayonets, furnished by Government. There is a fine gymnastic ground near the school, furnished with trapezes, parallel bars, vaulting horses, etc.; and there are two masters of gymnastics attached to the Middle School alone. There are row-boats, in which the boys can take their pleasure on the beautiful lake whenever the weather permits. There is an excellent fencing-school conducted by the Governor himself, who, although so heavy a man, is reckoned one of the best fencers of his own generation. The style taught is the old one, requiring the use of both hands to wield the sword; thrusting is little attempted, it is nearly all heavy slashing. The foils are made of long splinters of bamboo

[1] Stoves, however, are being introduced. In the higher Government schools, and in the Normal Schools, the students who are boarders obtain a better diet than most poor boys can get at home. Their rooms are also well warmed.

tied together so as to form something resembling elongated fasces: masks and wadded coats protect the head and body, for the blows given are heavy. This sort of fencing requires considerable agility, and gives more active exercise than our severer Western styles. Yet another form of healthy exercise consists of long journeys on foot to famous places. Special holidays are allowed for these. The students march out of town in military order, accompanied by some of their favourite teachers, and perhaps a servant to cook for them. Thus they may travel for a hundred, or even a hundred and fifty miles and back; but if the journey is to be a very long one, only the strong lads are allowed to go. They walk in waraji, the true straw sandal, closely tied to the naked foot, which it leaves perfectly supple and free, without blistering or producing corns. They sleep at night in Buddhist temples; and their cooking is done in the open fields, like that of soldiers in camp.

For those little inclined to such sturdy exercise there is a school library which is growing every year. There is also a monthly school magazine, edited and published by the boys. And there is a Students' Society, at whose regular meetings debates are held upon all conceivable subjects of interest to students.

§ 14

April 4, 1891.

The students of the third, fourth, and fifth year classes write for me once a week brief English compositions upon easy themes which I select for them. As a rule the themes are Japanese. Considering the immense difficulty of the English language to Japanese students, the ability of some of my boys to express their thoughts in it is astonishing. Their compositions have also another interest for me as revelations, not of individual character, but of national sentiment, or of aggregate

sentiment of some sort or other. What seems to me most surprising in the compositions of the average Japanese student is that they have no personal *cachet* at all. Even the handwriting of twenty English compositions will be found to have a curious family resemblance; and striking exceptions are too few to affect the rule. Here is one of the best compositions on my table, by a student at the head of his class. Only a few idiomatic errors have been corrected:

'THE MOON

'The Moon appears melancholy to those who are sad, and joyous to those who are happy. The Moon makes memories of home come to those who travel, and creates homesickness. So when the Emperor Godaigo, having been banished to Oki by the traitor Hojō, beheld the moonlight upon the seashore, he cried out, "*The Moon is heartless!*"

'The sight of the Moon *makes an immeasurable feeling in our hearts* when we look up at it through the clear air of a beauteous night.

'Our hearts ought to be pure and calm like the light of the Moon.

'Poets often compare the Moon to a Japanese [metal] mirror (*kagami*); and indeed its shape is the same when it is full.

'The refined man amuses himself with the Moon. He seeks some house looking out upon water, to watch the Moon, and to make verses about it.

'The best places from which to see the Moon are Tsukigashi, and the mountain Obasute.

'The light of the Moon shines alike upon foul and pure, upon high and low. That beautiful Lamp is neither yours nor mine, but everybody's.

'When we look at the Moon we should remember that its waxing and its waning are the signs of the truth that the

culmination of all things is likewise the beginning of their decline.'

Any person totally unfamiliar with Japanese educational methods might presume that the foregoing composition shows some original power of thought and imagination. But this is not the case. I found the same thoughts and comparisons in thirty other compositions upon the same subject. Indeed, the compositions of any number of middle-school students upon the same subject are certain to be very much alike in idea and sentiment – though they are none the less charming for that. As a rule the Japanese student shows little originality in the line of imagination. His imagination was made for him long centuries ago – partly in China, partly in his native land. From his childhood he is trained to see and to feel Nature exactly in the manner of those wondrous artists who, with a few swift brush-strokes, fling down upon a sheet of paper the colour-sensation of a chilly dawn, a fervid noon, an autumn evening. Through all his boyhood he is taught to commit to memory the most beautiful thoughts and comparisons to be found in his ancient native literature. Every boy has thus learned that the vision of Fuji against the blue resembles a white half-opened fan, hanging inverted in the sky. Every boy knows that cherry-trees in full blossom look as if the most delicate of flushed summer clouds were caught in their branches. Every boy knows the comparison between the falling of certain leaves on snow and the casting down of texts upon a sheet of white paper with a brush. Every boy and girl knows the verses comparing the print of cat's-feet on snow to plum-flowers,[1] and that comparing the impression of bokkuri on snow to the

[1] *Hachi yuki ya*
Neko no ashi ato
Ume no hana.

Japanese character for the number 'two.'[1] These were thoughts of old, old poets; and it would be very hard to invent prettier ones. Artistic power in composition is chiefly shown by the correct memorizing and clever combination of these old thoughts.

And the students have been equally well trained to discover a moral in almost everything, animate or inanimate. I have tried them with a hundred subjects – Japanese subjects – for composition; I have never found them to fail in discovering a moral when the theme was a native one. If I suggested 'Fireflies,' they at once approved the topic, and wrote for me the story of that Chinese student who, being too poor to pay for a lamp, imprisoned many fireflies in a paper lantern, and thus was able to obtain light enough to study after dark, and to become eventually a great scholar. If I said 'Frogs,' they wrote for me the legend of Ono-no-Tofu, who was persuaded to become a learned celebrity by witnessing the tireless perseverance of a frog trying to leap up to a willow-branch. I subjoin a few specimens of the moral ideas which I thus evoked. I have corrected some common mistakes in the originals, but have suffered a few singularities to stand:

'THE BOTAN

'The *botan* [Japanese peony] is large and beautiful to see; but it has a disagreeable smell. This should make us remember that what is only outwardly beautiful in human society should not attract us. *To be attracted by beauty only may lead us into fearful and fatal misfortune.* The best place to see the *botan* is the island of Daikonshima in the lake Nakaumi. There in the season of its flowering all the island is red with its blossoms.'

[1] *Ni no ji fumi dasu*
Bokkuri kana.

'THE DRAGON

'When the Dragon tries to ride the clouds and come into heaven there happens immediately a furious storm. When the Dragon dwells on the ground it is supposed to take the form of a stone or other object; but when it wants to rise it calls a cloud. Its body is composed of parts of many animals. It has the eyes of a tiger and the horns of a deer and the body of a crocodile and the claws of an eagle and two trunks like the trunk of an elephant. It has a moral. *We should try to be like the dragon, and find out and adopt all the good qualities of others.*'

At the close of this essay on the dragon is a note to the teacher, saying: 'I believe not there is any Dragon. But there are many stories and curious pictures about Dragon.'

'MOSQUITOES

'On summer nights we hear the sound of faint voices; and little things come and sting our bodies very violently. We call them *ka*, – in English "mosquitoes." I think the sting is useful for us, because if we begin to sleep, the *ka* shall come and sting us, uttering a small voice; – *then we shall be bringed back to study by the sting.*'

The following, by a lad of sixteen, is submitted only as a characteristic expression of half-formed ideas about a less familiar subject:

'EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE CUSTOMS

'Europeans wear very narrow clothes and they wear shoes always in the house. Japanese wear clothes which are very *lenient* and they do not *shoe* except when they walk *out-of-the-door.*

'What we think very strange is that in Europe every wife loves her husband more than her parents. In Nippon there is no wife who more loves not her parents than her husband.

'And Europeans walk out in the road with their wives, which we utterly refuse to, except on the festival of Hachiman.

'The Japanese woman is treated by man as a servant, while the European woman is respected as a master. I think these customs are both bad.

'We think it is very much trouble to treat European ladies; and we do not know why ladies are so much respected by Europeans.'

Conversation in the class-room about foreign subjects is often equally amusing and suggestive:

'Teacher, I have been told that if a European and his father and his wife were all to fall into the sea together, and that he only could swim, he would try to save his wife first. Would he really?'

'Probably,' I reply.

'But why?'

'One reason is that Europeans consider it a man's duty to help the weaker first – especially women and children.'

'And does a European love his wife more than his father and mother?'

'Not always – but generally, perhaps, he does.'

'Why, Teacher, according to our ideas that is very immoral.'

. . . 'Teacher, how do European women carry their babies?'

'In their arms.'

'Very tiring! And how far can a woman walk carrying a baby in her arms?'

'A strong woman can walk many miles with a child in her arms.'

'But she cannot use her hands while she is carrying a baby that way, can she?'

'Not very well.'

'Then it is a very bad way to carry babies,' etc.

§ 15

May 1, 1891.

My favourite students often visit me of afternoons. They first send me their cards, to announce their presence. On being told to come in they leave their footgear on the doorstep, enter my little study, prostrate themselves; and we all squat down together on the floor, which is in all Japanese houses like a soft mattress. The servant brings zabuton or small cushions to kneel upon, and cakes, and tea.

To sit as the Japanese do requires practice; and some Europeans can never acquire the habit. To acquire it, indeed, one must become accustomed to wearing Japanese costume. But once the habit of thus sitting has been formed, one finds it the most natural and easy of positions, and assumes it by preference for eating, reading, smoking, or chatting. It is not to be recommended, perhaps, for writing with a European pen, – as the motion in our Occidental style of writing is from the supported wrist; but it is the best posture for writing with the Japanese fude, in using which the whole arm is unsupported, and the motion from the elbow. After having become habituated to Japanese habits for more than a year, I must confess that I find it now somewhat irksome to use a chair.

When we have all greeted each other, and taken our places upon the kneeling cushions, a little polite silence ensues, which I am the first to break. Some of the lads speak a good deal of English. They understand me well when I pronounce every word slowly and distinctly, – using simple phrases, and avoiding idioms. When a word with which they are not familiar

must be used, we refer to a good English-Japanese dictionary, which gives each vernacular meaning both in the kana and in the Chinese characters.

Usually my young visitors stay a long time, and their stay is rarely tiresome. Their conversation and their thoughts are of the simplest and frankest. They do not come to learn: they know that to ask their teacher to teach out of school would be unjust. They speak chiefly of things which they think have some particular interest for me. Sometimes they scarcely speak at all, but appear to sink into a sort of happy reverie. What they come really for is the quiet pleasure of sympathy. Not an intellectual sympathy, but the sympathy of pure good-will: the simple pleasure of being quite comfortable with a friend. They peep at my books and pictures; and sometimes they bring books and pictures to show me, – delightfully queer things, – family heirlooms which I regret much that I cannot buy. They also like to look at my garden, and enjoy all that is in it even more than I. Often they bring me gifts of flowers. Never by any possible chance are they troublesome, impolite, curious, or even talkative. Courtesy in its utmost possible exquisiteness – an exquisiteness of which even the French have no conception – seems natural to the Izumo boy as the colour of his hair or the tint of his skin. Nor is he less kind than courteous. To contrive pleasurable surprises for me is one of the particular delights of my boys; and they either bring or cause to be brought to the house all sorts of strange things.

Of all the strange or beautiful things which I am thus privileged to examine, none gives me so much pleasure as a certain wonderful kakemono of Amida Nyorai. It is rather a large picture, and has been borrowed from a priest that I may see it. The Buddha stands in the attitude of exhortation, with one hand uplifted. Behind his head a huge moon makes an

aureole; and across the face of that moon stream winding lines of thinnest cloud. Beneath his feet, like a rolling of smoke, curl heavier and darker clouds. Merely as a work of colour and design, the thing is a marvel. But the real wonder of it is not in colour or design at all. Minute examination reveals the astonishing fact that every shadow and clouding is formed by a fairy text of Chinese characters so minute that only a keen eye can discern them; and this text is the entire text of two famed sutras, – the Kwammu-ryō-ju-kyō and the Amida-kyō, – 'text no larger than the limbs of fleas.' And all the strong dark lines of the figure, such as the seams of the Buddha's robe, are formed by the characters of the holy invocation of the Shin-shū sect, repeated thousands of times: '*Namu Amida Butsu!*' Infinite patience, tireless silent labour of loving faith, in some dim temple, long ago.

Another day one of my boys persuades his father to let him bring to my house a wonderful statue of Kōshi (Confucius), made, I am told, in China, toward the close of the period of the Ming dynasty. I am also assured it is the first time the statue has ever been removed from the family residence to be shown to anyone. Previously, whoever desired to pay it reverence had to visit the house. It is truly a beautiful bronze. The figure of a smiling, bearded old man, with fingers uplifted and lips apart as if discoursing. He wears quaint Chinese shoes, and his flowing robes are adorned with the figure of the mystic phœnix. The microscopic finish of detail seems indeed to reveal the wonderful cunning of a Chinese hand: each tooth, each hair, looks as though it had been made the subject of a special study.

Another student conducts me to the home of one of his relatives, that I may see a cat made of wood, said to have been chiselled by the famed Hidari Jingorō, – a cat crouching and

watching, and so life-like that real cats 'have been known to put up their backs and spit at it.'

§ 16

Nevertheless I have a private conviction that some old artists even now living in Matsue could make a still more wonderful cat. Among these is the venerable Arakawa Junosuke, who wrought many rare things for the Daimyō of Izumo in the Tempō era, and whose acquaintance I have been enabled to make through my school-friends. One evening he brings to my house something very odd to show me, concealed in his sleeve. It is a doll: just a small carven and painted head without a body, – the body being represented by a tiny robe only, attached to the neck. Yet as Arakawa Junosuke manipulates it, it seems to become alive. The back of its head is like the back of a very old man's head; but its face is the face of an amused child, and there is scarcely any forehead nor any evidence of a thinking disposition. And whatever way the head is turned, it looks so funny that one cannot help laughing at it. It represents a kirakubo, – what we might call in English 'a jolly old boy,' – one who is naturally too hearty and too innocent to feel trouble of any sort. It is not an original, but a model of a very famous original, – whose history is recorded in a faded scroll which Arakawa takes out of his other sleeve, and which a friend translates for me. This little history throws a curious light upon the simple-hearted ways of Japanese life and thought in other centuries:

'Two hundred and sixty years ago this doll was made by a famous maker of *No*-masks in the city of Kyōto, for the Emperor Go-midzu-no-O. The Emperor used to have it placed beside his pillow each night before he slept, and was

very fond of it. And he composed the following poem concerning it:

Yo no naka wo
Kiraku ni kurase
Nani goto mo
Omoeba omou
Omowaneba koso.[1]

'On the death of the Emperor this doll became the property of Prince Konoye, in whose family it is said to be still preserved.

'About one hundred and seven years ago, the then Ex-Empress, whose posthumous name is Sei-Kwa-Mon-Yin, borrowed the doll from Prince Konoye, and ordered a copy of it to be made. This copy she kept always beside her, and was very fond of it.

'After the death of the good Empress this doll was given to a lady of the court, whose family name is not recorded. Afterwards this lady, for reasons which are not known, cut off her hair and became a Buddhist nun, – taking the name of Shingyō-in.

'And one who knew the Nun Shingyō-in, – a man whose name was Kondo-ju-haku-in-Hokyō, – had the honour of receiving the doll as a gift.

'Now I, who write this document, at one time fell sick; and my sickness was caused by despondency. And my friend Kondo-ju-haku-in-Hokyō, coming to see me, said: "I have in my house something which will make you well." And he went home and, presently returning, brought to me this doll, and

[1] This little poem signifies that whoever in this world thinks much, must have care, and that not to think about things is to pass one's life in untroubled felicity.

lent it to me, – putting it by my pillow that I might see it and laugh at it.

'Afterward, I myself, having called upon the Nun Shingyō-in, whom I now also have the honour to know, wrote down the history of the doll, and make a poem thereupon.'

(Dated about ninety years ago: no signature.)

§ 17

June 1, 1891.

I find among the students a healthy tone of scepticism in regard to certain forms of popular belief. Scientific education is rapidly destroying credulity in old superstitions yet current among the unlettered, and especially among the peasantry, – as, for instance, faith in mamori and ofuda. The outward forms of Buddhism – its images, its relics, its commoner practices – affect the average student very little. He is not, as a foreigner may be, interested in iconography, or religious folk-lore, or the comparative study of religions; and in nine cases out of ten he is rather ashamed of the signs and tokens of popular faith all around him. But the deeper religious sense, which underlies all symbolism, remains with him; and the Monistic Idea in Buddhism is being strengthened and expanded, rather than weakened, by the new education. What is true of the effect of the public schools upon the lower Buddhism is equally true of its effect upon the lower Shintō. Shintō the students all sincerely are, or very nearly all; yet not as fervent worshippers of certain Kami, but as rigid observers of what the higher Shintō signifies, – loyalty, filial piety, obedience to parents, teachers, and superiors, and respect to ancestors. For Shintō means more than faith.

When, for the first time, I stood before the shrine of the Great Deity of Kitzuki, as the first Occidental to whom that privilege had been accorded, not without a sense of awe there

came to me the thought: 'This is the Shrine of the Father of a Race; this is the symbolic centre of a nation's reverence for its past.' And I, too, paid reverence to the memory of the progenitor of this people.

As I then felt, so feels the intelligent student of the Meiji era whom education has lifted above the common plane of popular creeds. And Shintō also means for him – whether he reasons upon the question or not – all the ethics of the family, and all that spirit of loyalty which has become so innate that, at the call of duty, life itself ceases to have value save as an instrument for duty's accomplishment. As yet, this Orient little needs to reason about the origin of its loftier ethics. Imagine the musical sense in our own race so developed that a child could play a complicated instrument so soon as the little fingers gained sufficient force and flexibility to strike the notes. By some such comparison only can one obtain a just idea of what inherent religion and instinctive duty signify in Izumo.

Of the rude and aggressive form of scepticism so common in the Occident, which is the natural reaction after sudden emancipation from superstitious belief, I find no trace among my students. But such sentiment may be found elsewhere, – especially in Tōkyō, – among the university students, one of whom, upon hearing the tones of a magnificent temple bell, exclaimed to a friend of mine: '*Is it not a shame that in this nineteenth century we must still hear such a sound?*"

For the benefit of curious travellers, however, I may here take occasion to observe that to talk Buddhism to Japanese gentlemen of the new school is in just as bad taste as to talk Christianity at home to men of that class whom knowledge has placed above creeds and forms. There are, of course, Japanese scholars willing to aid researches of foreign scholars in religion

or in folk-lore; but these specialists do not undertake to gratify idle curiosity of the 'globe-trotting' description. I may also say that the foreigner desirous to learn the religious ideas or superstitions of the common people must obtain them from the people themselves, – not from the educated classes.

§ 18

Among all my favourite students – two or three from each class – I cannot decide whom I like the best. Each has a particular merit of his own. But I think the names and faces of those of whom I am about to speak will longest remain vivid in my remembrance, – Ishihara, Otani-Masanobu, Adzuki-zawa, Yokogi, Shida.

Ishihara is a samurai, a very influential lad in his class because of his uncommon force of character. Compared with others, he has a somewhat brusque, independent manner, pleasing, however, by its honest manliness. He says everything he thinks, and precisely in the tone that he thinks it, even to the degree of being a little embarrassing sometimes. He does not hesitate, for example, to find fault with a teacher's method of explanation, and to insist upon a more lucid one. He has criticized me more than once; but I never found that he was wrong. We like each other very much. He often brings me flowers.

One day that he had brought two beautiful sprays of plum-blossoms, he said to me:

'I saw you bow before our Emperor's picture at the ceremony on the birthday of His Majesty. You are not like a former English teacher we had.'

'How?'

'He said we were savages.'

'Why?'

'He said there is nothing respectable except God, – *his*

God, – and that only vulgar and ignorant people respect anything else.'

'Where did he come from?'

'He was a Christian clergyman, and said he was an English subject.'

'But if he was an English subject, he was bound to respect Her Majesty the Queen. He could not even enter the office of a British consul without removing his hat.'

'I don't know what he did in the country he came from. But that was what he said. Now we think we should love and honour our Emperor. We think it is a duty. We think it is a joy. We think it is happiness to be able to give our lives for our Emperor.[1] But he said we were only savages – ignorant savages. What do you think of that?'

'I think, my dear lad, that he himself was a savage, – a vulgar, ignorant, savage bigot. I think it is your highest social duty to honour your Emperor, to obey his laws, and to be ready to give your blood whenever he may require it of you for the sake of Japan. I think it is your duty to respect the gods of your fathers, the religion of your country, – even if you yourself cannot believe all that others believe. And I think, also, that it is your duty, for your Emperor's sake and for your country's sake, to resent any such wicked and vulgar language as that you have told me of, no matter by whom uttered.'

Masanobu visits me seldom and always comes alone. A

[1] Having asked in various classes for written answers to the question, 'What is your dearest wish?' I found about twenty per cent. of the replies expressed, with little variation of words, the simple desire to die 'for His Sacred Majesty, Our Beloved Emperor.' But a considerable proportion of the remainder contained the same aspiration less directly stated in the wish to emulate the glory of Nelson, or to make Japan first among nations by heroism and sacrifice. While this splendid spirit lives in the hearts of her youth, Japan should have little to fear for the future.

slender, handsome lad, with rather feminine features, reserved and perfectly self-possessed in manner, refined. He is somewhat serious, does not often smile; and I never heard him laugh. He has risen to the head of his class, and appears to remain there without any extraordinary effort. Much of his leisure time he devotes to botany – collecting and classifying plants. He is a musician, like all the male members of his family. He plays a variety of instruments never seen or heard of in the West, including flutes of marble, flutes of ivory, flutes of bamboo of wonderful shapes and tones, and that shrill Chinese instrument called shō, – a sort of mouth-organ consisting of seventeen tubes of different lengths fixed in a silver frame. He first explained to me the uses in temple music of the taiko and shōko, which are drums; of the flutes called fei or teki; of the flageolet termed hichiriki; and of the kakko, which is a little drum shaped like a spool with very narrow waist. On great Buddhist festivals, Masanobu and his father and his brothers are the musicians in the temple services, and they play the strange music called Ōjō and Batto, – music which at first no Western ear can feel pleasure in, but which, when often heard, becomes comprehensible, and is found to possess a weird charm of its own. When Masanobu comes to the house, it is usually in order to invite me to attend some Buddhist or Shintō festival (*matsuri*) which he knows will interest me.

Adzukizawa bears so little resemblance to Masanobu that one might suppose the two belonged to totally different races. Adzukizawa is large, raw-boned, heavy-looking, with a face singularly like that of a North American Indian. His people are not rich; he can afford few pleasures which cost money, except one, – buying books. Even to be able to do this he works in his leisure hours to earn money. He is a perfect bookworm, a natural-born researcher, a collector of curious

documents, a haunter of all the queer second-hand stores in Teramachi and other streets where old manuscripts or prints are on sale as waste paper. He is an omnivorous reader, and a perpetual borrower of volumes, which he always returns in perfect condition after having copied what he deemed of most value to him. But his special delight is philosophy and the history of philosophers in all countries. He has read various epitomes of the history of philosophy in the Occident, and everything of modern philosophy which has been translated into Japanese, – including Spencer's *First Principles*. I have been able to introduce him to Lewes and John Fiske, – both of which he appreciates, – although the strain of studying philosophy in English is no small one. Happily he is so strong that no amount of study is likely to injure his health, and his nerves are tough as wire. He is quite an ascetic withal. As it is the Japanese custom to set cakes and tea before visitors, I always have both in readiness, and an especially fine quality of kwashi, made at Kitzuki, of which the students are very fond. Adzukizawa alone refuses to taste cakes or confectionery of any kind, saying: 'As I am the youngest brother, I must begin to earn my own living soon. I shall have to endure much hardship. And if I allow myself to like dainties now, I shall only suffer more later on.' Adzukizawa has seen much of human life and character. He is naturally observant; and he has managed in some extraordinary way to learn the history of everybody in Matsue. He has brought me old tattered prints to prove that the opinions now held by our director are diametrically opposed to the opinions he advocated fourteen years ago in a public address. I asked the director about it. He laughed and said, 'Of course that is Adzukizawa! But he is right: I was very young then.' And I wonder if Adzukizawa was ever young.

Yokogi, Adzukizawa's dearest friend, is a very rare visitor; for he is always studying at home. He is always first in his

class, – the third year class, – while Adzukizawa is fourth. Adzukizawa's account of the beginning of their acquaintance is this: 'I watched him when he came and saw that he spoke very little, walked very quickly, and looked straight into everybody's eyes. So I knew he had a particular character. I like to know people with a particular character.' Adzukizawa was perfectly right: under a very gentle exterior, Yokogi has an extremely strong character. He is the son of a carpenter; and his parents could not afford to send him to the Middle School. But he had shown such exceptional qualities while in the Elementary School that a wealthy man became interested in him, and offered to pay for his education.[1] He is now the pride of the school. He has a remarkably placid face, with peculiarly long eyes, and a delicious smile. In class he is always asking intelligent questions – questions so original that I am sometimes extremely puzzled how to answer them; and he never ceases to ask until the explanation is quite satisfactory to himself. He never cares about the opinion of his comrades if he thinks he is right. On one occasion when the whole class refused to attend the lectures of a new teacher of physics, Yokogi alone refused to act with them, – arguing that although the teacher was not all that could be desired, there was no immediate possibility of his removal, and no just reason for making unhappy a man who, though unskilled, was sincerely doing his best. Adzukizawa finally stood by him. These two alone attended the lectures until the remainder of the students, two weeks later, found that Yokogi's views were rational. On another occasion when some vulgar proselytism was attempted by a Christian missionary, Yokogi went boldly to the proselytizer's house, argued with him on the morality of his effort, and reduced him to silence. Some of his comrades praised his cleverness in the argument. 'I am not clever,' he made answer: 'it does not require clever-

[1] Beautiful generosities of this kind are not uncommon in Japan.

ness to argue against what is morally wrong; it requires only the knowledge that one is morally right.' At least such is about the translation of what he said as told me by Adzukizawa.

Shida, another visitor, is a very delicate, sensitive boy, whose soul is full of art. He is very skilful at drawing and painting; and he has a wonderful set of picture-books by the Old Japanese masters. The last time he came he brought some prints to show me, – rare ones, – fairy maidens and ghosts. As I looked at his beautiful pale face and weirdly frail fingers, I could not help fearing for him, – fearing that he might soon become a little ghost.

I have not seen him now for more than two months. He has been very, very ill; and his lungs are so weak that the doctor has forbidden him to converse. But Adzukizawa has been to visit him, and brings me this translation of a Japanese letter which the sick boy wrote and pasted upon the wall above his bed:

'Thou, my Lord-Soul, dost govern me. Thou knowest that I cannot now govern myself. Deign, I pray thee, to let me be cured speedily. Do not suffer me to speak much. Make me to obey in all things the command of the physician.

'This ninth day of the eleventh month of the twenty-fourth year of Meiji.

'From the sick body of Shida to his Soul.'

§ 19

September 4, 1891.

The long summer vacation is over; a new school year begins.

There have been many changes. Some of the boys I taught are dead. Others have graduated and gone away from Matsue for ever. Some teachers, too, have left the school, and their places have been filled; and there is a new Director.

And the dear good Governor has gone – been transferred to cold Niigata in the north-west. It was a promotion. But he had ruled Izumo for seven years, and everybody loved him, especially, perhaps, the students, who looked upon him as a father. All the population of the city crowded to the river to bid him farewell. The streets through which he passed on his way to take the steamer, the bridge, the wharves, even the roofs were thronged with multitudes eager to see his face for the last time. Thousands were weeping. And as the steamer glided from the wharf such a cry arose, – '*A-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a!*' It was intended for a cheer, but it seemed to me the cry of a whole city sorrowing, and so plaintive that I hope never to hear such a cry again.

The names and faces of the younger classes are all strange to me. Doubtless this was why the sensation of my first day's teaching in the school came back to me with extraordinary vividness when I entered the class-room of First Division A this morning.

Strangely pleasant is the first sensation of a Japanese class, as you look over the ranges of young faces before you. There is nothing in them familiar to inexperienced Western eyes; yet there is an indescribable pleasant something common to all. Those traits have nothing incisive, nothing forcible: compared with Occidental faces they seem but 'half-sketched,' so soft their outlines are – indicating neither aggressiveness nor shyness, neither eccentricity nor sympathy, neither curiosity nor indifference. Some, although faces of youths well grown, have a childish freshness and frankness indescribable; some are as uninteresting as others are attractive; a few are beautifully feminine. But all are equally characterized by a singular placidity, – expressing neither love nor hate nor anything save perfect repose and gentleness, – like the dreamy placidity of Buddhist images. At a later day you will no longer recognize

this aspect of passionless composure: with growing acquaintance each face will become more and more individualized for you by characteristics before imperceptible. But the recollection of that first impression will remain with you; and the time will come when you will find, by many varied experiences, how strangely it foreshadowed something in Japanese character to be fully learned only after years of familiarity. You will recognize in the memory of that first impression one glimpse of the race-soul, with its impersonal lovableness and its impersonal weaknesses, – one glimpse of the nature of a life in which the Occidental, dwelling alone, feels a psychic comfort comparable only to the nervous relief of suddenly emerging from some stifling atmospheric pressure into thin, clear, free living air.

§ 20

Was it not the eccentric Fourier who wrote about the horrible faces of 'the *civilisés*'? Whoever it was, would have found seeming confirmation of his physiognomical theory could he have known the effect produced by the first sight of European faces in the most eastern East. What we are taught at home to consider handsome, interesting, or characteristic in physiognomy does not produce the same impression in China or Japan. Shades of facial expression familiar to us as letters of our own alphabet are not perceived at all in Western features by these Orientals at first acquaintance. What they discern at once is the race-characteristic, not the individuality. The evolutional meaning of the deep-set Western eye, protruding brow, accipitrine nose, ponderous jaw – symbols of aggressive force and habit – was revealed to the gentler race by the same sort of intuition through which a tame animal immediately comprehends the dangerous nature of the first predatory enemy which it sees. To Europeans the smooth-featured, slen-

der, low-statured Japanese seemed like boys; and 'boy' is the term by which the native attendant of a Yokohama merchant is still called. To Japanese the first red-haired, rowdy, drunken European sailors seemed fiends, shōjō, demons of the sea; and by the Chinese the Occidentals are still called 'foreign devils.' The great stature and massive strength and fierce gait of foreigners in Japan enhanced the strange impression created by their faces. Children cried for fear on seeing them pass through the streets. And in remoter districts, Japanese children are still apt to cry at the first sight of a European or American face.

A lady of Matsue related in my presence this curious souvenir of her childhood: 'When I was a very little girl,' she said, 'our daimyō hired a foreigner to teach the military art. My father and a great many samurai went to receive the foreigner; and all the people lined the streets to see, – for no foreigner had ever come to Izumo before; and we all went to look. The foreigner came by ship: there were no steamboats here then. He was very tall, and walked quickly with long steps; and the children began to cry at the sight of him, because his face was not like the faces of the people of Nihon. My little brother cried out loud, and hid his face in mother's robe; and mother reproved him and said: "This foreigner is a very good man who has come here to serve our prince; and it is very disrespectful to cry at seeing him." But he still cried. I was not afraid; and I looked up at the foreigner's face as he came and smiled. He had a great beard; and I thought his face was good though it seemed to me a very strange face and stern. Then he stopped and smiled too, and put something in my hand, and touched my head and face very softly with his great fingers, and said something I could not understand, and went away. After he had gone I looked at what he put into my hand

and found that it was a pretty little glass to look through. If you put a fly under that glass it looks quite big. At that time I thought the glass was a very wonderful thing. I have it still.' She took from a drawer in the room and placed before me a tiny, dainty pocket-microscope.

The hero of this little incident was a French military officer. His services were necessarily dispensed with on the abolition of the feudal system. Memories of him still linger in Matsue; and old people remember a popular snatch about him, – a sort of rapidly-vociferated rigmarole, supposed to be an imitation of his foreign speech:

Tōjin no negoto niwa kinkarakuri medagashō,
Saiboji ga shimpeishite harishite keisan,
Hanryō na *Sacr-r-r-r-r-é-na-nom-da-ʃiu.*

§ 21

November 2, 1891.

Shida will never come to school again. He sleeps under the shadow of the cedars, in the old cemetery of Tōkōji. Yokogi, at the memorial service, read a beautiful address (*saibun*) to the soul of his dead comrade.

But Yokogi himself is down. And I am very much afraid for him. He is suffering from some affection of the brain, brought on, the doctor says, by studying a great deal too hard. Even if he gets well, he will always have to be careful. Some of us hope much; for the boy is vigorously built and so young. Strong Sakane burst a blood-vessel last month and is now well. So we trust that Yokogi may rally. Adzukizawa daily brings news of his friend.

But the rally never comes. Some mysterious spring in the mechanism of the young life has been broken. The mind lives

only in brief intervals between long hours of unconsciousness. Parents watch, and friends, for these living moments to whisper caressing things, or to ask: 'Is there anything thou dost wish?' And one night the answer comes:

'Yes: I want to go to the school; I want to see the school.'

Then they wonder if the fine brain has not wholly given way, while they make answer:

'It is midnight past, and there is no moon. And the night is cold.'

'No; I can see by the stars – I want to see the school again.'

They make kindliest protests in vain: the dying boy only repeats, with the plaintive persistence of a last wish,–

'I want to see the school again; I want to see it now.'

So there is a murmured consultation in the neighbouring room; and tansu-drawers are unlocked, warm garments prepared. Then Fusaichi, the strong servant, enters with lantern lighted, and cries out in his kind rough voice:

'Master Tomi will go to the school upon my back: 'tis but a little way; he shall see the school again.'

Carefully they wrap up the lad in wadded robes; then he puts his arms about Fusaichi's shoulders like a child; and the strong servant bears him lightly through the wintry street; and the father hurries beside Fusaichi, bearing the lantern. And it is not far to the school, over the little bridge.

The huge dark grey building looks almost black in the night; but Yokogi can see. He looks at the windows of his own classroom; at the roofed side-door where each morning for four happy years he used to exchange his getas for soundless sandals of straw; at the lodge of the slumbering Kodzukai;[1] at

[1] The college porter.

the silhouette of the bell hanging black in its little turret against the stars.

Then he murmurs:

'I can remember all now. I had forgotten – so sick I was. I remember everything again. Oh, Fusaichi, you are very good. I am so glad to have seen the school again.'

And they hasten back through the long void streets.

§ 22

November 26, 1891.

Yokogi will be buried to-morrow evening beside his comrade Shida.

When a poor person is about to die, friends and neighbours come to the house and do all they can to help the family. Some bear the tidings to distant relatives; others prepare all necessary things; others, when the death has been announced, summon the Buddhist priests.[1]

It is said that the priests know always of a parishioner's death at night, before any messenger is sent to them; for the soul of the dead knocks heavily, once, upon the door of the family temple. Then the priests arise and robe themselves, and when the messenger comes make answer: 'We know: we are ready.'

Meanwhile the body is carried out before the family butsudan, and laid upon the floor. No pillow is placed under the head. A naked sword is laid across the limbs to keep evil spirits away. The doors of the butsudan are opened; and tapers

[1] Except in those comparatively rare instances where the family is exclusively Shintō in its faith, or, although belonging to both faiths, prefers to bury its dead according to Shintō rites. In Matsue, as a rule, high officials only have Shintō funerals.

are lighted before the tablets of the ancestors; and incense is burned. All friends send gifts of incense. Wherefore a gift of incense, however rare and precious, given upon any other occasion, is held to be unlucky.

But the Shintō household shrine must be hidden from view with white paper; and the Shintō ofuda fastened upon the house door must be covered up during all the period of mourning.[1] And in all that time no member of the family may approach a Shintō temple, or pray to the Kami, or even pass beneath a torii.

A screen (*biōbu*) is extended between the body and the principal entrance of the death chamber; and the kaimyō, inscribed upon a strip of white paper, is fastened upon the screen. If the dead be young the screen must be turned upside-down; but this is not done in the case of old people.

Friends pray beside the corpse. There a little box is placed, containing one thousand peas, to be used for counting during the recital of those one thousand pious invocations, which, it is believed, will improve the condition of the soul on its unfamiliar journey.

The priests come and recite the sutras; and then the body is prepared for burial. It is washed in warm water, and robed

[1] Unless the dead be buried according to the Shintō rite. In Matsue the mourning period is usually fifty days. On the fifty-first day after the decease, all members of the family go to Enjōji-nada (the lake-shore at the foot of the hill on which the great temple of Enjōji stands) to perform the ceremony of purification. At Enjōji-nada, on the beach, stands a lofty stone statue of Jizō. Before it the mourners pray; then wash their mouths and hands with the water of the lake. Afterwards they go to a friend's house for breakfast, the purification being always performed at daybreak, if possible. During the mourning period, no member of the family can eat at a friend's house. But if the burial has been according to the Shintō rite, all these ceremonial observances may be dispensed with.

all in white. But the kimono of the dead is lapped over to the left side. Wherefore it is considered unlucky at any other time to fasten one's kimono thus, even by accident.

When the body has been put into that strange square coffin which looks something like a wooden palanquin, each relative puts also into the coffin some of his or her hair or nail parings, symbolizing their blood. And six rin are also placed in the coffin, for the six Jizō who stand at the heads of the ways of the Six Shadowy Worlds.

The funeral procession forms at the family residence. A priest leads it, ringing a little bell; a boy bears the ihai of the newly dead. The van of the procession is wholly composed of men – relatives and friends. Some carry hata, white symbolic bannerets; some bear flowers; all carry paper lanterns, – for in Izumo the adult dead are buried after dark: only children are buried by day. Next comes the kwan or coffin, borne palanquin-wise upon the shoulders of men of that pariah caste whose office it is to dig graves and assist at funerals. Lastly come the women mourners.

They are all white-hooded and white-robed from head to feet, like phantoms.[1] Nothing more ghostly than this sheeted train of an Izumo funeral procession, illuminated only by the glow of paper lanterns, can be imagined. It is a weirdness that, once seen, will often return in dreams.

At the temple the kwan is laid upon the pavement before the entrance; and another service is performed, with plaintive music and recitation of sutras. Then the procession forms again, winds once round the temple court, and takes its way to the cemetery. But the body is not buried until twenty-four hours later, lest the supposed dead should awake in the grave.

[1] But at samurai funerals in the olden time the women were robed in black.

Corpses are seldom burned in Izumo. In this, as in other matters, the predominance of Shintō sentiment is manifest.

§ 23

For the last time I see his face again, as he lies upon his bed of death, – white-robed from neck to feet, – white-girdled for his shadowy journey, – but smiling with closed eyes in almost the same queer gentle way he was wont to smile at class on learning the explanation of some seeming riddle in our difficult English tongue. Only, methinks, the smile is sweeter now, as with sudden larger knowledge of more mysterious things. So smiles, through dusk of incense in the great temple of Tōkōji, the golden face of Buddha.

§ 24

December 23, 1891.

The great bell of Tōkōji is booming for the memorial service, – for the tsuito-kwai of Yokogi, – slowly and regularly as a minute-gun. Peal on peal of its rich bronze thunder shakes over the lake, surges over the roofs of the town, and breaks in deep sobs of sound against the green circle of the hills.

It is a touching service, this tsuito-kwai, with quaint ceremonies which, although long since adopted into Japanese Buddhism, are of Chinese origin and are beautiful. It is also a costly ceremony; and the parents of Yokogi are very poor. But all the expenses have been paid by voluntary subscription of students and teachers. Priests from every great temple of the Zen sect in Izumo have assembled at Tōkōji. All the teachers of the city and all the students have entered the hondo of the huge temple, and taken their places to the right and to the left of the high altar, – kneeling on the matted floor, and leaving, on the long broad steps without, a thousand shoes and sandals.

Before the main entrance, and facing the high shrine, a new butsudan has been placed, within whose open doors the ihai of the dead boy glimmers in lacquer and gilding. And upon a small stand before the butsudan have been placed an incense-vessel with bundles of senko-rods and offerings of fruits, confections, rice, and flowers. Tall and beautiful flower-vases on each side of the butsudan are filled with blossoming sprays, exquisitely arranged. Before the honzon tapers burn in massive candelabra whose stems of polished brass are writhing monsters, – the Dragon Ascending and the Dragon Descending; and incense curls up from vessels shaped like the sacred deer, like the symbolic tortoise, like the meditative stork of Buddhist legend. And beyond these, in the twilight of the vast alcove, the Buddha smiles the smile of Perfect Rest.

Between the butsudan and the honzon a little table has been placed; and on either side of it the priests kneel in ranks, facing each other: rows of polished heads, and splendours of vermilion silks and vestments gold-embroidered.

The great bell ceases to peal; the Segaki prayer, which is the prayer uttered when offerings of food are made to the spirits of the dead, is recited; and a sudden sonorous measured tapping, accompanied by a plaintive chant, begins the musical service. The tapping is the tapping of the mokugyo, – a huge wooden fish-head, lacquered and gilded, like the head of a dolphin grotesquely idealized, – marking the time; and the chant is the chant of the Chapter of Kwannon in the Hokkekyō, with its magnificent invocation:

'O Thou whose eyes are clear, whose eyes are kind, whose eyes are full of pity and of sweetness, – O Thou Lovely One, with thy beautiful face, with thy beautiful eyes, –

'O Thou Pure One, whose luminosity is without spot, whose knowledge is without shadow, – O Thou forever shining like that

Sun whose glory no power may repel, – Thou Sun-like in the course of Thy mercy, pourest Light upon the world!'

And while the voices of the leaders chant clear and high in vibrant unison, the multitude of the priestly choir recite in profoundest undertone the mighty verses; and the sound of their recitation is like the muttering of surf.

The mokugyo ceases its dull echoing, the impressive chant ends, and the leading officiants, one by one, high priests of famed temples, approach the ihai. Each bows low, ignites an incense-rod, and sets it upright in the little vase of bronze. Each at a time recites a holy verse of which the initial sound is the sound of a letter in the kaimyō of the dead boy; and these verses, uttered in the order of the characters upon the ihai, form the sacred Acrostic whose name is The Words of Perfume.

Then the priests retire to their places; and after a little silence begins the reading of the saibun, – the reading of the addresses to the soul of the dead. The students speak first, – one from each class, chosen by election. The elected rises, approaches the little table before the high altar, bows to the honzon, draws from his bosom a paper and reads it in those melodious, chanting, and plaintive tones which belong to the reading of Chinese texts. So each one tells the affection of the living to the dead, in words of loving grief and loving hope. And last among the students a gentle girl rises – a pupil of the Normal School – to speak in tones soft as a bird's. As each saibun is finished, the reader lays the written paper upon the table before the honzon, and bows, and retires.

It is now the turn of the teachers; and an old man takes his place at the little table, – old Katayama, the teacher of Chinese, famed as a poet, adored as an instructor. And because the students all love him as a father, there is a strange

intensity of silence as he begins, – *Kō-Shimane-Ken-Jinjō-Chūgakkō-yo-nen-sei:*

'Here upon the twenty-third day of the twelfth month of the twenty-fourth year of Meiji, I, Katayama Shōkei, teacher of the Jinjō Chūgakkō of Shimane Ken, attending in great sorrow the holy service of the dead [*tsui-fuku*], do speak unto the soul of Yokogi Tomisaburo, my pupil.

'Having been, as thou knowest, for twice five years, at different periods, a teacher of the school, I have indeed met with not a few most excellent students. But very, very rarely in any school may the teacher find one such as thou, – so patient and so earnest, so diligent and so careful in all things, – so distinguished among thy comrades by thy blameless conduct, observing every precept, never breaking a rule.

'Of old in the land of Kihoku, famed for its horses, whenever a horse of rarest breed could not be obtained, men were wont to say: "*There is no horse.*" Still there are many fine lads among our students, – many *ryume*, fine young steeds; but we have lost the best.

'To die at the age of seventeen, – the best period of life for study, – even when of the Ten Steps thou hadst already ascended six! Sad is the thought; but sadder still to know that thy last illness was caused only by thine own tireless zeal of study. Even yet more sad our conviction that with those rare gifts, and with that rare character of thine, thou wouldst surely, in that career to which thou wast destined, have achieved good and great things, honouring the names of thine ancestors, couldst thou have lived to manhood.

'I see thee lifting thy hand to ask some question; then bending above thy little desk to make note of all thy poor old teacher was able to tell thee. Again I see thee in the ranks, – thy rifle upon thy shoulder, – so bravely erect during the military

exercises. Even now thy face is before me, with its smile, as plainly as if thou wert present in the body; – thy voice I think I hear distinctly as though thou hadst but this instant finished speaking; – yet I know that, except in memory, these never will be seen and heard again. O Heaven, why didst thou take away that dawning life from the world, and leave such a one as I – old Shōkei, feeble, decrepit, and of no more use?

'To thee my relation was indeed only that of teacher to pupil. Yet what is my distress! I have a son of twenty-four years; he is now far from me, in Yokohama. I know he is only a worthless youth;[1] yet never for so much as the space of one hour does the thought of him leave his old father's heart. Then how must the father and mother, the brothers and the sisters of this gentle and gifted youth feel now that he is gone! Only to think of it forces the tears from my eyes: I cannot speak – so full my heart is.

'*Aa! aa!* – thou hast gone from us; thou hast gone from us! Yet though thou hast died, thy earnestness, thy goodness, will long be honoured and told of as examples to the students of our school.

'Here, therefore, do we, thy teachers and thy schoolmates, hold this service in behalf of thy spirit, – with prayer and offerings. Deign thou, O gentle Soul, to honour our love by the acceptance of our humble gifts.'

Then a sound of sobbing is suddenly whelmed by the resonant booming of the great fish's-head, as the high-pitched voices of the leaders of the chant begin the grand Nehan-gyō, the Sutra of Nirvana, the song of passage triumphant over the

[1] Said only in courteous self-depreciation. In the same way a son, writing to his parent, would never according to Japanese ideas of true courtesy and duty sign himself '*Your affectionate son*,' but '*Your ungrateful*, or *unloving son*.'

Sea of Death and Birth; and deep below those high tones and the hollow echoing of the mokugyo, the surging bass of a century of voices reciting the sonorous words, sounds like the breaking of a sea:

'*Shō-gyō mu-jō, je-sho meppō. – Transient are all. They, being born, must die. And being born, are dead. And being dead, are glad to be at rest.*'

CHAPTER FIVE

Two Strange Festivals

★

§ 1

THE outward signs of any Japanese matsuri are the most puzzling of enigmas to the stranger who sees them for the first time. They are many and varied; they are quite unlike anything in the way of holiday decoration ever seen in the Occident; they have each a meaning founded upon some belief or some tradition, – a meaning known to every Japanese child; but that meaning is utterly impossible for any foreigner to guess. Yet whoever wishes to know something of Japanese popular life and feeling must learn the signification of at least the most common among festival symbols and tokens. Especially is such knowledge necessary to the student of Japanese art: without it, not only the delicate humour and charm of countless designs must escape him, but in many instances the designs themselves must remain incomprehensible to him. For hundreds of years the emblems of festivity have been utilized by the Japanese in graceful decorative ways: they figure in metalwork, on porcelain, on the red or black lacquer of the humblest household utensils, on little brass pipes, on the clasps of tobacco-pouches. It may even be said that the majority of common decorative design is emblematical. The very figures of which the meaning seems most obvious, – those matchless studies[1] of animal or vegetable life with which the Western

[1] As it has become, among a certain sect of Western Philistines and self-constituted art critics, the fashion to sneer at any writer who becomes enthusiastic about the *truth to nature* of Japanese art, I may cite here the words of England's most celebrated living *naturalist* on this very subject. Mr. Wallace's authority will scarcely, I presume, be questioned, even by the Philistines referred to:

'Dr. Mohnike possesses a large collection of coloured sketches of

curio-buyer is most familiar, – have usually some ethical signification which is not perceived at all. Or take the commonest design dashed with a brush upon the fusuma of a cheap hotel, – a lobster, – sprigs of pine, – tortoises waddling in a curl of water, – a pair of storks, – a spray of bamboo. It is rarely that a foreign tourist thinks of asking why such designs are used instead of others, – even when he has seen them repeated, with slight variation, at twenty different places along his route. They have become conventional simply because they are emblems of which the sense is known to all Japanese, however ignorant, but is never even remotely suspected by the stranger.

The subject is one about which a whole encyclopedia might be written, but about which I know very little, – much too little for a special essay. But I may venture, by way of illustration, to speak of the curious objects exhibited during two antique festivals still observed in all parts of Japan.

§ 2

The first is the Festival of the New Year, which lasts for three days. In Matsue its celebration is particularly interesting, as the old city still preserves many matsuri customs which have either become, or are rapidly becoming, obsolete elsewhere. The streets are then profusely decorated, and all shops

the plants of Japan made by a Japanese lady, *which are the most masterly things I have ever seen.* Every stem, twig, and leaf is produced by single touches of the brush, the character and perspective of very complicated plants being admirably given, and the articulations of stem and leaves shown *in a most scientific manner.*' (*Malay Archipelago*, chap. xx.)

Now this was written in 1857, before European methods of drawing had been introduced. The same art of painting leaves, etc., with single strokes of the brush is still common in Japan, – even among the poorest class of decorators.

are closed. Shimenawa or shimekazari, – the straw ropes which have been sacred symbols of Shintō from the mythical age, – are festooned along the façades of the dwellings, and so interjoined that you see to right or left what seems but a single mile-long shimenawa, with its straw pendents and white fluttering paper gohei, extending along either side of the street as far as the eye can reach. Japanese flags – bearing on a white ground the great crimson disk which is the emblem of the Land of the Rising Sun – flutter above the gateways; and the same national emblem glows upon countless paper lanterns strung in rows along the eaves or across the streets and temple avenues. And before every gate or doorway a kadomatsu ('gate pine-tree') has been erected. So that all the ways are lined with green, and full of bright colour.

The kadomatsu is more than its name implies. It is a young pine, or part of a pine, conjoined with plum branches and bamboo cuttings.[1] Pine, plum, and bamboo are growths of emblematic significance. Anciently the pine alone was used; but from the era of O-ei, the bamboo was added; and within more recent times the plum-tree.

The pine has many meanings. But the fortunate one most generally accepted is that of endurance and successful energy in time of misfortune. As the pine keeps its green leaves when other trees lose their foliage, so the true man keeps his courage and his strength in adversity. The pine is also, as I have said elsewhere, a symbol of vigorous old age.

[1] There is a Buddhist saying about the kadomatsu:

Kadomatsu
Meido no tabi no
Ichi-ri-zuka.

The meaning is that each kadomatsu is a milestone on the journey to the Meido; or, in other words, that each New Year's festival signals only the completion of another stage of the ceaseless journey to death.

No European could possibly guess the riddle of the bamboo. It represents a sort of pun in symbolism. There are two Chinese characters both pronounced *setsu*, – one signifying the *node* or joint of the bamboo, and the other virtue, fidelity, constancy. Therefore is the bamboo used as a felicitous sign. The name 'Setsu,' be it observed, is often given to Japanese maidens, – just as the names 'Faith,' 'Fidelia,' and 'Constance' are given to English girls.

The plum-tree – of whose emblematic meaning I said something in a former paper about Japanese gardens – is not invariably used, however; sometimes sakaki, the sacred plant of Shintō, is substituted for it; and sometimes only pine and bamboo form the kadomatsu.

Every decoration used upon the New Year's festival has a meaning of a curious and unfamiliar kind; and the very commonest of all – the straw rope – possesses the most complicated symbolism. In the first place it is scarcely necessary to explain that its origin belongs to that most ancient legend of the Sun-Goddess being tempted to issue from the cavern into which she had retired, and being prevented from returning thereunto by a deity who stretched a rope of straw across the entrance, – all of which is written in the *Kojiki*. Next observe that, although the shimenawa may be of any thickness, it must be twisted so that the direction of the twist is to the left; for in ancient Japanese philosophy the left is the 'pure' or fortunate side: owing perhaps to the old belief, common among the uneducated of Europe to this day, that the heart lies to the left. Thirdly, note that the pendent straws, which hang down from the rope at regular intervals, in tufts, like fringing, must be of different numbers according to the place of the tufts, beginning with the number three: so that the first tuft has three straws, the second five, the third seven, the fourth again three, the fifth five, and the sixth seven, – and so on, the whole length of the rope. The

origin of the pendent paper cuttings (*gohei*), which alternate with the straw tufts, is likewise to be sought in the legend of the Sun-Goddess; but the gohei also represent offerings of cloth anciently made to the gods according to a custom long obsolete.

But besides the gohei, there are many other things attached to the shimenawa of which you could not imagine the signification. Among these are fern-leaves, bitter oranges, yuzuri-leaves, and little bundles of charcoal.

Why fern-leaves (*moromoki* or *urajirō*)? Because the fern-leaf is the symbol of the hope of exuberant posterity: even as it branches and branches so may the happy family increase and multiply through the generations.

Why bitter oranges (*daidai*)? Because there is a Chinese word daidai signifying 'from generation unto generation.' Wherefore the fruit called daidai has become a fruit of good omen.

But why charcoal (*sumi*)? It signifies 'prosperous *changelessness*.' Here the idea is decidedly curious. Even as the colour of charcoal cannot be changed, so may the fortunes of those we love remain for ever unchanged in all that gives happiness! The signification of the yuzuri-leaf I explained in a former paper.'

Besides the great shimenawa in front of the house, shimenawa or shimekazari[1] are suspended above the toko, or alcoves, in each apartment; and over the back gate, or over the entrance to the gallery of the second story (if there be a second story), is hung a wajime, which is a very small shimekazari twisted into a sort of wreath, and decorated with fern-leaves, gohei, and yuzuri-leaves.

But the great domestic display of the festival is the decora-

[1] The difference between the shimenawa and shimekazari is that the latter is a strictly decorative straw rope, to which many curious emblems are attached.

tion of the kamidana, – the shelf of the Gods. Before the household miya are placed great double rice cakes; and the shrine is beautiful with flowers, a tiny shimekazari, and sprays of sakaki. There also are placed a string of cash; kabu (turnips); daikon (radishes); a tai-fish, which is the 'king of fishes,' dried slices of salt cuttlefish; jinbaso, or 'the Seaweed of the Horse of the God'; [1] – also the seaweed kombu, which is a symbol of pleasure and of joy, because its name is deemed to be a homonym for gladness; and mochibana, artificial blossoms formed of rice flour and straw.

The sambō is a curiously shaped little table on which offerings are made to the Shintō gods; and almost every well-to-do household in Izumo has its own sambō; – such a family sambō being smaller, however, than sambō used in the temples. At the advent of the New Year's Festival, bitter oranges, rice, and rice-flour cakes, native sardines (*iwashi*), chikara-iwai ('strength-rice-bread'), black peas, dried chestnuts, and a fine lobster, are all tastefully arranged upon the family sambō. Before each visitor the sambō is set; and the visitor, by saluting it with a prostration, expresses not only his heartfelt wish that all the good-fortune symbolized by the objects upon the sambō may come to the family, but also his reverence for the household gods. The black peas (*mame*) signify bodily strength and health, because a word similarly pronounced, though written with a different ideograph, means 'robust.' But why a lobster? Here we have another curious conception. The lobster's body is bent double: the body of the man who lives to a very great old age is also bent. Thus the lobster stands for a symbol of extreme old age; and in artistic design signifies the wish that our friends may live so long that they will become bent like

[1] It belongs to the sargassum family, and is full of air sacs. Various kinds of edible seaweed form a considerable proportion of Japanese diet.

lobsters, – under the weight of years. And the dried chestnuts (*kachiguri*) are emblems of success, because the first character of their name in Japanese is the homonym of kachi, which means 'victory,' 'conquest.'

There are at least a hundred other singular customs and emblems belonging to the New Year's Festival which would require a large volume to describe. I have mentioned only a few which immediately appear to even casual observation.

§ 3

The other festival I wish to refer to is that of the Setsubun, which, according to the ancient Japanese calendar, corresponded with the beginning of the natural year, – the period when winter first softens into spring. It is what we might term, according to Professor Chamberlain, 'a sort of movable feast'; and it is chiefly famous for the curious ceremony of the casting out of devils, – Oni-yarai. On the eve of the Setsubun, a little after dark, the Yaku-otoshi, or caster-out of devils, wanders through the streets from house to house, rattling his shakujō,[1] and uttering his strange professional cry: '*Oni wa soto! – fuku wa uchi!*' [Devils out! Good-fortune in!] For a trifling fee he performs his little exorcism in any house to which he is called. This simply consists in the recitation of certain parts of a Buddhist kyō, or sutra, and the rattling of the shakujō. Afterwards dried peas (*shiro-mame*) are thrown about the house in four directions. For some mysterious reason, devils do not like dried peas – and flee therefrom. The peas thus

[1] This is a curiously shaped staff with which the divinity Jizō is commonly represented. It is still carried by Buddhist mendicants, and there are several sizes of it. That carried by the Yaku-otoshi is usually very short. There is a tradition that the shakujō was first invented as a means of giving warning to insects or other little creatures in the path of the Buddhist pilgrim, so that they might not be trodden upon unawares.

scattered are afterward swept up and carefully preserved until the first clap of spring thunder is heard, when it is the custom to cook and eat some of them. But just why, I cannot find out; neither can I discover the origin of the dislike of devils for dried peas. On the subject of this dislike, however, I confess my sympathy with devils.

After the devils have been properly cast out, a small charm is placed above all the entrances of the dwelling to keep them from coming back again. This consists of a little stick about the length and thickness of a skewer, a single holly-leaf, and the head of a dried iwashi, – a fish resembling a sardine. The stick is stuck through the middle of the holly-leaf; and the fish's head is fastened into a split made in one end of the stick; the other end being slipped into some joint of the timber-work immediately above a door. But why the devils are afraid of the holly-leaf and the fish's head, nobody seems to know. Among the people the origin of all these curious customs appears to be quite forgotten; and the families of the upper classes who still maintain such customs believe in the superstitions relating to the festival just as little as Englishmen to-day believe in the magical virtues of mistletoe or ivy.

This ancient and merry annual custom of casting out devils has been for generations a source of inspiration to Japanese artists. It is only after a fair acquaintance with popular customs and ideas that the foreigner can learn to appreciate the delicious humour of many art-creations which he may wish, indeed, to buy just because they are so oddly attractive in themselves, but which must really remain enigmas to him, so far as their inner meaning is concerned, unless he knows Japanese life. The other day a friend gave me a little card-case of perfumed leather. On one side was stamped in relief the face of a devil, through the orifice of whose yawning mouth could be seen, – painted upon the silk lining of the interior, – the laughing,

chubby face of Otafuku, joyful Goddess of Good Luck. In itself the thing was very curious and pretty; but the real merit of its design was this comical symbolism of good wishes for the New Year: '*Oni wa soto! – fuku wa uchi!*'

§ 4

Since I have spoken of the custom of eating some of the Setsubun peas at the time of the first spring thunder, I may here take the opportunity to say a few words about superstitions in regard to thunder which have not yet ceased to prevail among the peasantry.

When a thunder-storm comes, the big brown mosquito curtains are suspended, and the women and children – perhaps the whole family – squat down under the curtains till the storm is over. From ancient days it has been believed that lightning cannot kill anybody under a mosquito curtain. The Raijū, or Thunder-Animal, cannot pass through a mosquito-curtain. Only the other day, an old peasant who came to the house with vegetables to sell told us that he and his whole family, while crouching under their mosquito-netting during a thunder-storm, actually saw the Lightning rushing up and down the pillar of the balcony opposite their apartment, – furiously clawing the woodwork, but unable to enter because of the mosquito-netting. His house had been badly damaged by a flash; but he supposed the mischief to have been accomplished by the Claws of the Thunder-Animal.

The Thunder-Animal springs from tree to tree during a storm, they say; wherefore to stand under trees in time of thunder and lightning is very dangerous: the Thunder-Animal might step on one's head or shoulders. The Thunder-Animal is also alleged to be fond of eating the human navel; for which reason people should be careful to keep their navels well covered during storms, and to lie down upon their stomachs if

possible. Incense is always burned during storms, because the Thunder-Animal hates the smell of incense. A tree stricken by lightning is thought to have been torn and scarred by the claws of the Thunder-Animal; and fragments of its bark and wood are carefully collected and preserved by dwellers in the vicinity; for the wood of a blasted tree is alleged to have the singular virtue of curing toothache.

There are many stories of the Raijū having been caught and caged. Once, it is said, the Thunder-Animal fell into a well, and got entangled in the ropes and buckets, and so was captured alive. And old Izumo folk say they remember that the Thunder-Animal was once exhibited in the court of the Temple of Tenjin in Matsue, inclosed in a cage of brass; and that people paid one sen each to look at it. It resembled a badger. When the weather was clear it would sleep contentedly in its cage. But when there was thunder in the air, it would become excited, and seem to obtain great strength, and its eyes would flash dazzlingly.

§ 5

There is one very evil spirit, however, who is not in the least afraid of dried peas, and who cannot be so easily got rid of as the common devils; and that is Bimbogami.

But in Izumo people know a certain household charm whereby Bimbogami may sometimes be cast out.

Before any cooking is done in a Japanese kitchen, the little charcoal fire is first blown to a bright red heat with that most useful and simple household utensil called a hifukidake. The hifukidake ('fire-blow-bamboo') is a bamboo tube usually about three feet long and about two inches in diameter. At one end – the end which is to be turned toward the fire – only a very small orifice is left; the woman who prepares the meal places the other end to her lips, and blows through the tube

upon the kindled charcoal. Thus a quick fire may be obtained in a few minutes.

In course of time the hifukidake becomes scorched and cracked and useless. A new 'fire-blow-tube' is then made; and the old one is used as a charm against Bimbogami. One little copper coin (*rin*) is put into it, some magical formula is uttered, and then the old utensil, with the rin inside of it, is either simply thrown out through the front gate into the street, or else flung into some neighbouring stream. This – I know not why – is deemed equivalent to pitching Bimbogami out of doors, and rendering it impossible for him to return during a considerable period.

It may be asked how is the invisible presence of Bimbogami to be detected.

The little insect which makes that weird ticking noise at night called in England the *Death-watch* has a Japanese relative named by the people Bimbomushi, or the 'Poverty-Insect.' It is said to be the servant of Bimbogami, the God of Poverty; and its ticking in a house is believed to signal the presence of that most unwelcome deity.

§ 6

One more feature of the Setsubun festival is worthy of mention, – the sale of the hitogata ('people-shapes'). These are little figures, made of white paper, representing men, women, and children. They are cut out with a few clever scissors strokes; and the difference of sex is indicated by variations in the shape of the sleeves and the little paper obi. They are sold in the Shintō temples. The purchaser buys one for every member of the family, – the priest writing upon each the age and sex of the person for whom it is intended. These hitogata are then taken home and distributed; and each person

slightly rubs his body or her body with the paper, and says a little Shintō prayer. Next day the hitogata are returned to the kannushi, who, after having recited certain formulæ over them, burns them with holy fire.[1] By this ceremony it is hoped that all physical misfortunes will be averted from the family during a year.

[1] I may make mention here of another matter, in no way relating to the Setsubun.

There lingers in Izumo a wholesome – and I doubt not formerly a most valuable – superstition about the sacredness of writing. Paper upon which anything has been written, or even printed, must not be crumpled up, or trodden upon, or dirtied, or put to any base use. If it be necessary to destroy a document, the paper should be burned. I have been gently reproached in a little hotel at which I stopped for tearing up and crumpling some paper covered with my own writing.

CHAPTER SIX

By the Japanese Sea

*

§ 1

It is the fifteenth day of the seventh month, – and I am in Hōki.

The blanched road winds along a coast of low cliffs, – the coast of the Japanese Sea. Always on the left, over a narrow strip of stony land, or a heaping of dunes, its vast expanse appears, blue-wrinkling to that pale horizon beyond which Korea lies, under the same white sun. Sometimes, through sudden gaps in the cliff's verge, there flashes to us the running of the surf. Always upon the right another sea, – a silent sea of green, reaching to far misty ranges of wooded hills, with huge pale peaks behind them, – a vast level of rice-fields, over whose surface soundless waves keep chasing each other under the same great breath that moves the blue to-day from Chōsen to Japan.

Though during a week the sky has remained unclouded, the sea has for several days been growing angrier; and now the muttering of its surf sounds far into the land. They say that it always roughens thus during the period of the Festival of the Dead, – the three days of the Bon, which are the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of the seventh month by the ancient calendar. And on the sixteenth day, after the shōryōbune, which are the Ships of Souls, have been launched, no one dares to enter it: no boats can then be hired; all the fishermen remain at home. For on that day the sea is the highway of the dead, who must pass back over its waters to their mysterious home; and therefore upon that day is it called Hotoke-umi, – the Buddha-Flood, – the Tide of the Returning Ghosts. And ever upon the night of that sixteenth day, – whether the sea be

calm or tumultuous, – all its surface shimmers with faint lights gliding out to the open, – the dim fires of the dead; and there is heard a murmuring of voices, like the murmur of a city far-off, – the indistinguishable speech of souls.

§ 2

But it may happen that some vessel, belated in spite of desperate effort to reach port, may find herself far out at sea upon the night of the sixteenth day. Then will the dead rise tall about the ship, and reach long hands and murmur: '*Tago, tago o-kure! – tago o-kure!*'[1] Never may they be refused; but, before the bucket is given, the bottom of it must be knocked out. Woe to all on board should an entire tago be suffered to fall even by accident into the sea! – for the dead would at once use it to fill and sink the ship.

Nor are the dead the only powers invisible dreaded in the time of the Hotoke-umi. Then are the Ma most powerful, and the Kappa.[2]

[1] 'A bucket honourably condescend [to give].'

[2] The Kappa is not properly a sea goblin, but a river goblin, and haunts the sea only in the neighbourhood of river mouths.

About a mile and a half from Matsue, at the little village of Kawachi-mura, on the river called Kawachi, stands a little temple called Kawako-no-miya, or the Miya of the Kappa. (In Izumo, among the common people, the word 'Kappa' is not used, but the term *Kawako*, or 'The Child of the River.') In this little shrine is preserved a document said to have been signed by a Kappa. The story goes that in ancient times the Kappa dwelling in the Kawachi used to seize and destroy many of the inhabitants of the village and many domestic animals. One day, however, while trying to seize a horse that had entered the river to drink, the Kappa got its head twisted in some way under the belly-band of the horse, and the terrified animal, rushing out of the water, dragged the Kappa into a field. There the owner of the horse and a number of peasants seized and bound the Kappa. All the villagers gathered to see the monster, which bowed its head to the ground, and audibly begged for mercy. The peasants desired

But in all times the swimmer fears the Kappa, the Ape of Waters, hideous and obscene, who reaches up from the deeps to draw men down, and to devour their entrails.

Only their entrails.

The corpse of him who has been seized by the Kappa may be cast on shore after many days. Unless long battered against the rocks by heavy surf, or nibbled by fishes, it will show no outward wound. But it will be light and hollow – empty like a long-dried gourd.

§ 3

Betimes, as we journey on, the monotony of undulating blue on the left, or the monotony of billowing green upon the right, is broken by the grey apparition of a cemetery, – a cemetery so long that our jinricksha men, at full run, take a full quarter of an hour to pass the huge congregation of its perpendicular stones. Such visions always indicate the approach of villages; but the villages prove to be as surprisingly small as the cemeteries are surprisingly large. By hundreds of thousands do the silent populations of the hakaba outnumber the folk of the hamlets to which they belong, – tiny thatched settlements sprinkled along the leagues of coast, and sheltered from the wind only by ranks of sombre pines. Legions on legions of stones, – a host of sinister witnesses of the cost of the present to the past, – and old, old, old! – hundreds so long in place that they have been

to kill the goblin at once; but the owner of the horse, who happened to be the head-man of the mura, said: 'It is better to make it swear never again to touch any person or animal belonging to Kawachi-mura.' A written form of oath was prepared and read to the Kappa. It said that It could not write, but that It would sign the paper by dipping Its hand in ink, and pressing the imprint thereof at the bottom of the document. This having been agreed to and done, the Kappa was set free. From that time forward no inhabitant or animal of Kawachi-mura was ever assaulted by the goblin.

worn into shapelessness merely by the blowing of sand from the dunes, and their inscriptions utterly effaced. It is as if one were passing through the burial-ground of all who ever lived on this wind-blown shore since the being of the land.

And in all these hakaba – for it is the Bon – there are new lanterns before the newer tombs, – the white lanterns which are the lanterns of graves. To-night the cemeteries will be all aglow with lights like the fires of a city for multitude. But there are also unnumbered tombs before which no lanterns are, – elder myriads, each the token of a family extinct, or of which the absent descendants have forgotten even the name. Dim generations whose ghosts have none to call them back, no local memories to love – so long ago obliterated were all things related to their lives.

§ 4

Now many of these villages are only fishing settlements, and in them stand old thatched homes of men who sailed away on some eve of tempest, and never came back. Yet each drowned sailor has his tomb in the neighbouring hakaba, and beneath it something of him has been buried.

What?

Among these people of the west something is always preserved which in other lands is cast away without a thought, – the hozo-no-o, the flower-stalk of a life, the navel-string of the newly-born. It is enwrapped carefully in many wrappings; and upon its outermost covering are written the names of the father, the mother, and the infant, together with the date and hour of birth, – and it is kept in the family o-'mamori-bukuro. The daughter, becoming a bride, bears it with her to her new home: for the son it is preserved by his parents. It is buried with the dead; and should one die in a foreign land, or perish at sea, it is entombed in lieu of the body.

§ 5

Concerning them that go down into the sea in ships, and stay there, strange beliefs prevail on this far coast, – beliefs more primitive, assuredly, than the gentle faith which hangs white lanterns before the tombs. Some hold that the drowned never journey to the Meido. They quiver for ever in the currents; they billow in the swaying of tides; they toil in the wake of the junks; they shout in the plunging of breakers. 'Tis their white hands that toss in the leap of the surf; their clutch that clatters the shingle, or seizes the swimmer's feet in the pull of the undertow. And the seamen speak euphemistically of the O-'baké, the honourable ghosts, and fear them with a great fear.

Wherefore cats are kept on board!

A cat, they aver, has power to keep the O-baké away. How or why, I have not yet found any to tell me. I know only that cats are deemed to have power over the dead. If a cat be left alone with a corpse, will not the corpse arise and dance? And of all cats a mike-neko, or cat of three colours, is most prized on this account by sailors. But if they cannot obtain one, – and cats of three colours are rare, – they will take another kind of cat; and nearly every trading junk has a cat; and when the junk comes into port, its cat may generally be seen, – peeping through some little window in the vessel's side, or squatting in the opening where the great rudder works, – that is, if the weather be fair and the sea still.

§ 6

But these primitive and ghastly beliefs do not affect the beautiful practices of Buddhist faith in the time of the Bon; and from all these little villages the shōryōbune are launched upon the sixteenth day. They are much more elaborately and expensively constructed on this coast than in some other parts

of Japan; for though made of straw only, woven over a skeleton framework, they are charming models of junks, complete in every detail. Some are between three and four feet long. On the white paper sail is written the kaimyō or soul-name of the dead. There is a small water-vessel on board, filled with fresh water, and an incense-cup; and along the gunwales flutter little paper banners bearing the mystic manji, which is the Sanscrit swastika.[1]

The form of the shōryōbune and the customs in regard to the time and manner of launching them differ much in different provinces. In most places they are launched for the family dead in general, wherever buried; and they are in some places launched only at night, with small lanterns on board. And I am told also that it is the custom at certain sea-villages to launch the lanterns all by themselves, in lieu of the shōryōbune proper, – lanterns of a particular kind being manufactured for that purpose only.

But on the Izumo coast, and elsewhere along this western shore, the soul-boats are launched only for those who have been drowned at sea, and the launching takes place in the morning instead of at night. Once every year, for ten years after death, a shōryōbune is launched; in the eleventh year the ceremony ceases. Several shōryōbune which I saw at Inasa were really beautiful, and must have cost a rather large sum for poor fisher-folk to pay. But the ship-carpenter who made them said that all the relatives of a drowned man contribute to purchase the little vessel, year after year.

§ 7

Near a sleepy little village called Kami-ichi I make a brief halt in order to visit a famous sacred tree. It is in a grove close

[1] The Buddhist symbol 卍.

to the public highway, but upon a low hill. Entering the grove I find myself in a sort of miniature glen surrounded on three sides by very low cliffs, above which enormous pines are growing, incalculably old. Their vast coiling roots have forced their way through the face of the cliffs, splitting rocks; and their mingling crests make a green twilight in the hollow. One pushes out three huge roots of a very singular shape; and the ends of these have been wrapped about with long white papers bearing written prayers, and with offerings of seaweed. The shape of these roots, rather than any tradition, would seem to have made the tree sacred in popular belief: it is the object of a special cult; and a little torii has been erected before it, bearing a votive annunciation of the most artless and curious kind. I cannot venture to offer a translation of it – though for the anthropologist and folk-lorist it certainly possesses peculiar interest. The worship of the tree, or at least of the Kami supposed to dwell therein, is one rare survival of a phallic cult probably common to most primitive races, and formerly widespread in Japan. Indeed it was suppressed by the Government scarcely more than a generation ago. On the opposite side of the little hollow, carefully posed upon a great loose rock, I see something equally artless and almost equally curious, – a kitōja-no-mono, or ex-voto. Two straw figures joined together and reclining side by side: a straw man and a straw woman. The workmanship is childishly clumsy; but still the woman can be distinguished from the man by the ingenious attempt to imitate the female coiffure with a straw wisp. And as the man is represented with a queue, – now worn only by aged survivors of the feudal era, – I suspect that this kitōja-no-mono was made after some ancient and strictly conventional model.

Now this queer ex-voto tells its own story. Two who loved each other were separated by the fault of the man; the charm of some jorō, perhaps, having been the temptation to faithlessness.

Then the wronged one came here and prayed the Kami to dispel the delusion of passion and touch the erring heart. The prayer has been heard; the pair have been reunited; and *she* has therefore made these two quaint effigies with her own hands, and brought them to the Kami of the pine, – tokens of her innocent faith and her grateful heart.

§ 8

Night falls as we reach the pretty hamlet of Hamamura, our last resting-place by the sea, for to-morrow our way lies inland. The inn at which we lodge is very small, but very clean and cosy; and there is a delightful bath of natural hot water; for the yadoya is situated close to a natural spring. This spring, so strangely close to the sea beach, also furnishes, I am told, the baths of all the houses in the village.

The best room is placed at our disposal; but I linger awhile to examine a very fine shōryōbune, waiting, upon a bench near the street entrance, to be launched to-morrow. It seems to have been finished but a short time ago; for fresh clippings of straw lie scattered around it, and the kaimyō has not yet been written upon its sail. I am surprised to hear that it belongs to a poor widow and her son, both of whom are employed by the hotel.

I was hoping to see the Bon-odori at Hamamura, but I am disappointed. At all the villages the police have prohibited the dance. Fear of cholera has resulted in stringent sanitary regulations. In Hamamura the people have been ordered to use no water for drinking, cooking, or washing, except the hot water of their own volcanic springs.

A little middle-aged woman, with a remarkably sweet voice, comes to wait upon us at supper-time. Her teeth are blackened

and her eyebrows shaved after the fashion of married women twenty years ago; nevertheless her face is still a pleasant one, and in her youth she must have been uncommonly pretty. Though acting as a servant, it appears that she is related to the family owning the inn, and that she is treated with the consideration due to kindred. She tells us that the shōryōbune is to be launched for her husband and brother – both fishermen of the village, who perished in sight of their own home eight years ago. The priest of the neighbouring Zen temple is to come in the morning to write the kaimyō upon the sail, as none of the household are skilled in writing the Chinese characters.

I make her the customary little gift, and, through my attendant, ask her various questions about her history. She was married to a man much older than herself, with whom she lived very happily; and her brother, a youth of eighteen, dwelt with them. They had a good boat and a little piece of ground, and she was skilful at the loom; so they managed to live well. In summer the fishermen fish at night: when all the fleet is out, it is pretty to see the line of torch-fires in the offing, two or three miles away, like a string of stars. They do not go out when the weather is threatening; but in certain months the great storms (*taifu*) come so quickly that the boats are overtaken almost before they have time to hoist sail. Still as a temple pond the sea was on the night when her husband and brother last sailed away; the taifu rose before daybreak. What followed, she relates with a simple pathos that I cannot reproduce in our less artless tongue:

'All the boats had come back except my husband's; for my husband and my brother had gone out farther than the others, so they were not able to return as quickly. And all the people were looking and waiting. And every minute the waves seemed to be growing higher and the wind more terrible; and

the other boats had to be dragged far up on the shore to save them. Then suddenly we saw my husband's boat coming very, very quickly. We were so glad! It came quite near, so that I could see the face of my husband and the face of my brother. But suddenly a great wave struck it upon one side, and it turned down into the water, and it did not come up again. And then we saw my husband and my brother swimming; but we could see them only when the waves lifted them up. Tall like hills the waves were, and the head of my husband, and the head of my brother would go up, up, up, and then down, and each time they rose to the top of a wave so that we could see them they would cry out, "*Tasukete! tasukete!*" [1] But the strong men were afraid; the sea was too terrible; I was only a woman! Then my brother could not be seen any more. My husband was old, but very strong; and he swam a long time, – so near that I could see his face was like the face of one in fear, – and he called "*Tasukete!*" But none could help him; and he also went down at last. And yet I could see his face before he went down.

'And for a long time after, every night, I used to see his face as I saw it then, so that I could not rest, but only weep. And I prayed and prayed to the Buddhas and to the Kami-Sama that I might not dream that dream. Now it never comes; but I can still see his face, even while I speak. . . . In that time my son was only a little child.'

Not without sobs can she conclude her simple recital. Then, suddenly bowing her head to the matting, and wiping away her tears with her sleeve, she humbly prays our pardon for this little exhibition of emotion, and laughs – the soft low laugh *de rigueur* of Japanese politeness. This, I must confess, touches me still more than the story itself. At a fitting moment

[1] 'Help! help!'

my Japanese attendant delicately changes the theme, and begins a light chat about our journey, and the danna-sama's interest in the old customs and legends of the coast. And he succeeds in amusing her by some relation of our wanderings in Izumo.

She asks whither we are going. My attendant answers probably as far as Tottori.

'Aa! Tottori! Sō degozarimasu ka? . . . Now, there is an old story, – the Story of the Futon of Tottori. But the danna-sama knows that story?'

Indeed, the danna-sama does not, and begs earnestly to hear it. And the story is set down somewhat as I learn it through the lips of my interpreter.

§ 9

Many years ago, a very small yadoya in Tottori town received its first guest, an itinerant merchant. He was received with more than common kindness, for the landlord desired to make a good name for his little inn. It was a new inn, but as its owner was poor, most of its dōgu – furniture and utensils – had been purchased from the furuteya.[1] Nevertheless, everything was clean, comforting, and pretty. The guest ate heartily and drank plenty of good warm sake; after which his bed was prepared on the soft floor, and he laid himself down to sleep.

[But here I must interrupt the story for a few moments, to say a word about Japanese beds. Never, unless some inmate happen to be sick, do you see a bed in any Japanese house by day, though you visit all the rooms and peep into all the corners. In fact, no bed exists, in the Occidental meaning of the word. That which the Japanese call bed has no bedstead,

[1] *Furuteya*, the establishment of a dealer in second-hand wares, – *furute*.

no spring, no mattress, no sheets, no blankets. It consists of thick quilts only, stuffed, or, rather, padded with cotton, which are called futon. A certain number of futon are laid down upon the tatami (the floor mats), and a certain number of others are used for coverings. The wealthy can lie upon five or six quilts, and cover themselves with as many as they please, while poor folk must content themselves with two or three. And of course there are many kinds, from the servants' cotton futon which is no larger than a Western hearthrug, and not much thicker, to the heavy and superb futon silk, eight feet long by seven broad, which only the kanemochi can afford. Besides these there is the yogi, a massive quilt made with wide sleeves like a kimono, in which you can find much comfort when the weather is extremely cold. All such things are neatly folded up and stowed out of sight by day in alcoves contrived in the wall and closed with fusuma – pretty sliding screen doors covered with opaque paper usually decorated with dainty designs. There also are kept those curious wooden pillows, invented to preserve the Japanese coiffure from becoming disarranged during sleep.

The pillow has a certain sacredness; but the origin and the precise nature of the beliefs concerning it I have not been able to learn. Only this I know, that to touch it with the foot is considered very wrong; and that if it be kicked or moved thus even by accident, the clumsiness must be atoned for by lifting the pillow to the forehead with the hands, and replacing it in its original position respectfully, with the word 'go-men,' signifying, I pray to be excused.]

Now, as a rule, one sleeps soundly after having drunk plenty of warm sake, especially if the night be cool and the bed very snug. But the guest, having slept but a very little while, was aroused by the sound of voices in his room, –

voices of children, always asking each other the same questions: –

'Ani-San samukarō?'

'Omae samukarō?'

The presence of children in his room might annoy the guest, but could not surprise him, for in these Japanese hotels there are no doors, but only papered sliding screens between room and room. So it seemed to him that some children must have wandered into his apartment, by mistake, in the dark. He uttered some gentle rebuke. For a moment only there was silence; then a sweet, thin, plaintive voice queried, close to his ear, 'Ani-San samukarō?' [Elder Brother probably is cold?], and another sweet voice made answer caressingly, 'Omae samukarō?' [Nay, thou probably art cold?]

He arose and rekindled the candle in the andon,[1] and looked about the room. There was no one. The shōji were all closed. He examined the cupboards; they were empty. Wondering, he lay down again, leaving the light still burning; and immediately the voices spoke again, complainingly, close to his pillow:

'Ani-San samukarō?'

'Omae samukarō?'

Then, for the first time, he felt a chill creep over him, which was not the chill of the night. Again and again he heard, and each time he became more afraid. For he knew that the voices were *in the futon!* It was the covering of the bed that cried out thus.

He gathered hurriedly together the few articles belonging to him, and, descending the stairs, aroused the landlord and told what had passed. Then the host, much angered, made reply: 'That to make pleased the honourable guest everything has been done, the truth is; but the honourable guest too much

[1] *Andon*, a paper lantern of peculiar construction, used as a night light. Some forms of the andon are remarkably beautiful.

august sake having drank, bad dreams has seen.' Nevertheless the guest insisted upon paying at once that which he owed, and seeking lodging elsewhere.

Next evening there came another guest who asked for a room for the night. At a late hour the landlord was aroused by his lodger with the same story. And this lodger, strange to say, had not taken any sake. Suspecting some envious plot to ruin his business, the landlord answered passionately: 'Thee to please all things honourably have been done: nevertheless, ill-omened and vexatious words thou utterest. And that my inn my means-of-livelihood is – that also thou knowest. Wherefore that such things be spoken, right-there-is-none!' Then the guest, getting into a passion, loudly said things much more evil; and the two parted in hot anger.

But after the guest was gone, the landlord, thinking all this very strange, ascended to the empty room to examine the futon. And while there, he heard the voices, and he discovered that the guests had said only the truth. It was one covering – only one – which cried out. The rest were silent. He took the covering into his own room, and for the remainder of the night lay down beneath it. And the voices continued until the hour of dawn: 'Ani-San samukarō?' 'Omae samukarō?' So that he could not sleep.

But at break of day he rose up and went out to find the owner of the furuteya at which the futon had been purchased. The dealer knew nothing. He had bought the futon from a smaller shop, and the keeper of that shop had purchased it from a still poorer dealer dwelling in the farthest suburb of the city. And the innkeeper went from one to the other, asking questions.

Then at last it was found that the futon had belonged to a poor family, and had been bought from the landlord of a little house in which the family had lived, in the neighbourhood of the town. And the story of the futon was this: –

The rent of the little house was only sixty sen a month, but even this was a great deal for the poor folks to pay. The father could earn only two or three yen a month, and the mother was ill and could not work; and there were two children, – a boy of six years and a boy of eight. And they were strangers in Tottori.

One winter's day the father sickened; and after a week of suffering he died, and was buried. Then the long-sick mother followed him, and the children were left alone. They knew no one whom they could ask for aid; and in order to live they began to sell what there was to sell.

That was not much: the clothes of the dead father and mother, and most of their own; some quilts of cotton, and a few poor household utensils, – hibachi, bowls, cups, and other trifles. Every day they sold something, until there was nothing left but one futon. And a day came when they had nothing to eat; and the rent was not paid.

The terrible Dai-kan had arrived, the season of greatest cold; and the snow had drifted too high that day for them to wander far from the little house. So they could only lie down under their one futon, and shiver together, and compassionate each other in their own childish way, –

'Ani-San, samukarō?'

'Omae samukarō?'

They had no fire, nor anything with which to make fire; and the darkness came; and the icy wind screamed into the little house.

They were afraid of the wind, but they were more afraid of the house-owner, who roused them roughly to demand his rent. He was a hard man, with an evil face. And finding there was none to pay him, he turned the children into the snow, and took their one futon away from them, and locked up the house.

They had but one thin blue kimono each, for all their other

clothes had been sold to buy food; and they had nowhere to go. There was a temple of Kwannon not far away, but the snow was too high for them to reach it. So when the landlord was gone, they crept back behind the house. There the drowsiness of cold fell upon them, and they slept, embracing each other to keep warm. And while they slept, the gods covered them with a new futon, – ghostly-white and very beautiful. And they did not feel cold any more. For many days they slept there; then somebody found them, and a bed was made for them in the hakaba of the Temple of Kwannon-of-the-Thousand-Arms.

And the innkeeper, having heard these things, gave the futon to the priests of the temple, and caused the kyō to be recited for the little souls. And the futon ceased thereafter to speak.

§ 10

One legend recalls another; and I hear to-night many strange ones. The most remarkable is a tale which my attendant suddenly remembers, – a legend of Izumo.

Once there lived in the Izumo village called Mochida-no-ura a peasant who was so poor that he was afraid to have children. And each time that his wife bore him a child he cast it into the river, and pretended that it had been born dead. Sometimes it was a son, sometimes a daughter; but always the infant was thrown into the river at night. Six were murdered thus.

But, as the years passed, the peasant found himself more prosperous. He had been able to purchase land and to lay by money. And at last his wife bore him a seventh child, – a boy.

Then the man said: 'Now we can support a child, and we

shall need a son to aid us when we are old. And this boy is beautiful. So we will bring him up.'

And the infant thrived; and each day the hard peasant wondered more at his own heart, – for each day he knew that he loved his son more.

One summer's night he walked out into his garden, carrying his child in his arms. The little one was five months old.

And the night was so beautiful, with its great moon, that the peasant cried out, –

'*Aa! kon ya med xurashii e yo da!*' [Ah! to-night truly a wondrously beautiful night is!]

Then the infant, looking up into his face and speaking the speech of a man, said, –

'Why, father! *the* LAST *time you threw me away* the night was just like this, and the moon looked just the same, did it not?'[1]

And thereafter the child remained as other children of the same age, and spoke no word.

The peasant became a monk.

§ 11

After the supper and the bath, feeling too warm to sleep, I wander out alone to visit the village hakaba, a long cemetery upon a sandhill, or rather a prodigious dune, thinly covered at its summit with soil, but revealing through its crumbling flanks the story of its creation by ancient tides, mightier than tides of to-day.

I wade to my knees in sand to reach the cemetery. It is a warm moonlight night, with a great breeze. There are many bon-lanterns (*bondōrō*), but the sea-wind has blown out most of them; only a few here and there still shed a soft white glow,

[1] '*Ototsan! washi wo shimai ni shitesashita toki mo, chōdo kon ya no yona tsuki yo data-ne?*' – Izumo dialect.

– pretty shrine-shaped cases of wood, with apertures of symbolic outline, covered with white paper. Visitors beside myself there are none, for it is late. But much gentle work has been done here to-day, for all the bamboo vases have been furnished with fresh flowers or sprays, and the water basins filled with fresh water, and the monuments cleansed and beautified. And in the farthest nook of the cemetery I find, before one very humble tomb, a pretty zen or lacquered dining tray, covered with dishes and bowls containing a perfect dainty little Japanese repast. There is also a pair of new chopsticks, and a little cup of tea, and some of the dishes are still warm. A loving woman's work; the prints of her little sandals are fresh upon the path.

§ 12

There is an Irish folk-saying that any dream may be remembered if the dreamer, after awakening, forbear to scratch his head in the effort to recall it. But should he forget this precaution, never can the dream be brought back to memory: as well try to re-form the curlings of a smoke-wreath blown away.

Nine hundred and ninety-nine of a thousand dreams are indeed hopelessly evaporative. But certain rare dreams, which come when fancy has been strangely impressed by unfamiliar experiences, – dreams particularly apt to occur in time of travel, – remain in recollection, imaged with all the vividness of real events.

Of such was the dream I dreamed at Hamamura, after having seen and heard those things previously written down.

Some pale broad paved place – perhaps the thought of a temple court – tinted by a faint sun; and before me a woman, neither young nor old, seated at the base of a great grey pedestal

that supported I know not what, for I could look only at the woman's face. Awhile I thought that I remembered her – a woman of Izumo; then she seemed a weirdness. Her lips were moving, but her eyes remained closed, and I could not choose but look at her.

And in a voice that seemed to come thin through distance of years she began a soft wailing chant; and, as I listened, vague memories came to me of a Celtic lullaby. And as she sang, she loosed with one hand her long black hair, till it fell coiling upon the stones. And, having fallen, it was no longer black, but blue, – pale day-blue, – and was moving sinuously, crawling with swift blue ripplings to and fro. And then, suddenly, I became aware that the ripplings were far, very far away, and that the woman was gone. There was only the sea, blue-billowing to the verge of heaven, with long slow flashings of soundless surf.

And wakening, I heard in the night the muttering of the real sea, – the vast husky speech of the Hotoke-umi, – *the Tide of the Returning Ghosts.*

CHAPTER SEVEN

Of a Dancing-Girl

*

NOTHING is more silent than the beginning of a Japanese banquet; and no one, except a native, who observes the opening scene could possibly imagine the tumultuous ending.

The robed guests take their places, quite noiselessly and without speech, upon the kneeling-cushions. The lacquered services are laid upon the matting before them by maidens whose bare feet make no sound. For a while there is only smiling and flitting, as in dreams. You are not likely to hear any voices from without, as a banqueting-house is usually secluded from the street by spacious gardens. At last the master of ceremonies, host or provider, breaks the hush with the consecrated formula: '*O-somatsu degozarimasu ga! – dōzo o-hashi!*' whereat all present bow silently, take up their hashi (chopsticks), and fall to. But hashi, deftly used, cannot be heard at all. The maidens pour warm sake into the cup of each guest without making the least sound; and it is not until several dishes have been emptied, and several cups of sake absorbed, that tongues are loosened.

Then, all at once, with a little burst of laughter, a number of young girls enter, make the customary prostration of greeting, glide into the open space between the ranks of the guests, and begin to serve the wine with a grace and dexterity of which no common maid is capable. They are pretty; they are clad in very costly robes of silk; they are girdled like queens; and the beautifully dressed hair of each is decked with mock flowers, with wonderful combs and pins, and with curious ornaments of gold. They greet the stranger as if they had always known him; they jest, laugh, and utter funny little cries. These are the geisha,[1] or dancing-girls, hired for the banquet.

[1] The Kyōto word is *maiko*.

Samisen [1] tinkle. The dancers withdraw to a clear space at the farther end of the banqueting-hall, always vast enough to admit of many more guests than ever assemble upon common occasions. Some form the orchestra, under the direction of a woman of uncertain age; there are several samisen, and a tiny drum played by a child. Others, singly or in pairs, perform the dance. It may be swift and merry, consisting wholly of graceful posturing, – two girls dancing together with such coincidence of step and gesture as only years of training could render possible. But more frequently it is rather like acting than like what we Occidentals call dancing, – acting accompanied with extraordinary waving of sleeves and fans, and with a play of eyes and features, sweet, subtle, subdued, wholly Oriental. There are more voluptuous dances known to geisha, but upon ordinary occasions and before refined audiences they portray beautiful old Japanese traditions, like the legend of the fisher Urashima, beloved by the Sea God's daughter; and at intervals they sing ancient Chinese poems, expressing a natural emotion with delicious vividness by a few exquisite words. And always they pour the wine, – that warm, pale yellow, drowsy wine which fills the veins with soft contentment, making a faint sense of ecstasy, through which, as through some poppied sleep, the commonplace becomes wondrous and blissful, and the geisha Maids of Paradise, and the world much sweeter than, in the natural order of things, it could ever possibly be.

The banquet, at first so silent, slowly changes to a merry tumult. The company break ranks, form groups; and from group to group the girls pass, laughing, prattling, – still pouring sake into the cups which are being exchanged and emptied with low bows.[2] Men begin to sing old samurai songs, old

[1] Guitars of three strings.

[2] It is sometimes customary for guests to exchange cups, after duly rinsing them. It is always a compliment to ask for your friend's cup.

Chinese poems. One or two even dance. A geisha tucks her robe well up to her knees; and the samisen strike up the quick melody, '*Kompira funé-funé.*' As the music plays, she begins to run lightly and swiftly in a figure of 8, and a young man, carrying a sake bottle and cup, also runs in the same figure of 8. If the two meet on a line, the one through whose error the meeting happens must drink a cup of sake. The music becomes quicker and quicker and the runners run faster and faster, for they must keep time to the melody; and the geisha wins. In another part of the room, guests and geisha are playing ken. They sing as they play, facing each other, and clap their hands, and fling out their fingers at intervals with little cries and the samisen keep time.

Choïto, – don-don!
Otagaidané;
Choïto, – don-don!
Oidemashitané;
Choïto, – don-don!
Shimaimashitané.

Now, to play ken with a geisha requires a perfectly cool head, a quick eye, and much practice. Having been trained from childhood to play all kinds of ken, – and there are many, – she generally loses only for politeness, when she loses at all. The signs of the most common ken are a Man, a Fox, and a Gun. If the geisha make the sign of the Gun, you must instantly, and in exact time to the music, make the sign of the Fox, who cannot use the Gun. For if you make the sign of the Man, then she will answer with the sign of the Fox, who can deceive the Man, and you lose. And if she make the sign of the Fox first, then you should make the sign of the Gun, by which the Fox can be killed. But all the while you must watch her bright eyes and supple hands. These are pretty; and if you

suffer yourself, just for one fraction of a second, to think how pretty they are, you are bewitched and vanquished.

Notwithstanding all this apparent comradeship, a certain rigid decorum between guest and geisha is invariably preserved at a Japanese banquet. However flushed with wine a guest may have become, you will never see him attempt to caress a girl; he never forgets that she appears at the festivities only as a human flower, to be looked at, not to be touched. The familiarity which foreign tourists in Japan frequently permit themselves with geisha or with waiter-girls, though endured with smiling patience, is really much disliked, and considered by native observers an evidence of extreme vulgarity.

For a time the merriment grows; but as midnight draws near, the guests begin to slip away, one by one, unnoticed. Then the din gradually dies down, the music stops; and at last the geisha, having escorted the latest of the feasters to the door, with laughing cries of *Sayōnara*, can sit down alone to break their long fast in the deserted hall.

Such is the geisha's rôle. But what is the mystery of her? What are her thoughts, her emotions, her secret self? What is her veritable existence beyond the night circle of the banquet lights, far from the illusion formed around her by the mist of wine? Is she always as mischievous as she seems while her voice ripples out with mocking sweetness the words of the ancient song?

Kimi to neyaru ka, go sengoku toruka?
Nanno gosengoku kimi to neyo?[1]

[1] 'Once more to rest beside her, or keep five thousand koku?
What care I for koku? Let me be with her!'
There lived in ancient times a hatamoto called Fuji-eda Geki, a vassal of the Shōgun. He had an income of five thousand koku of rice, – a great income in those days. But he fell in love with an inmate of the Yoshiwara, named Ayaginu, and wished to marry her. When his

Or might we think her capable of keeping that passionate promise she utters so deliciously?

Omae shindara tera ewa yaranu!
Yaete konishite sake de nomu.[1]

'Why, as for that,' a friend tells me, 'there was O'-Kama of Ōsaka who realized the song only last year. For she, having collected from the funeral pile the ashes of her lover, mingled them with sake, and at a banquet drank them, in the presence of many guests.' In the presence of many guests! Alas for romance!

Always in the dwelling which a band of geisha occupy there is a strange image placed in the alcove. Sometimes it is of clay, rarely of gold, most commonly of porcelain. It is reverenced: offerings are made to it, sweetmeats and rice bread and wine; incense smoulders in front of it, and a lamp is burned before it. It is the image of a kitten erect, one paw outstretched as if inviting, – whence its name, 'the Beckoning Kitten.'[2] It is the *genius loci*: it brings good-fortune, the patronage of the rich, the favour of banquet-givers. Now, they who know the soul of the geisha aver that the semblance of the image is the semblance of herself, – playful and pretty, soft and young, lithe and caressing, and cruel as a devouring fire.

Worse, also, than this they have said of her: that in her shadow treads the God of Poverty, and that the Fox-women

master bade the vassal choose between his fortune and his passion, the lovers fled secretly to a farmer's house, and there committed suicide together. And the above song was made about them. It is still sung.

[1] 'Dear, shouldst thou die, grave shall hold thee never!
I thy body's ashes, mixed with wine, will drink.'

[2] Maneki-Neko.

are her sisters; that she is the ruin of youth, the waster of fortunes, the destroyer of families; that she knows love only as the source of the follies which are her gain, and grows rich upon the substance of men whose graves she has made; that she is the most consummate of pretty hypocrites, the most dangerous of schemers, the most insatiable of mercenaries, the most pitiless of mistresses. This cannot all be true. Yet thus much is true, – that, like the kitten, the geisha is by profession a creature of prey. There are many really lovable kittens. Even so there must be really delightful dancing-girls.

The geisha is only what she has been made in answer to foolish human desire for the illusion of love mixed with youth and grace, but without regrets or responsibilities: wherefore she has been taught, besides ken, to play at hearts. Now, the eternal law is that people may play with impunity at any game in this unhappy world except three, which are called Life, Love, and Death. Those the gods have reserved to themselves, because nobody else can learn to play them without doing mischief. Therefore, to play with a geisha any game much more serious than ken, or at least *go*, is displeasing to the gods.

The girl begins her career as a slave, a pretty child bought from miserably poor parents under a contract, according to which her services may be claimed by the purchasers for eighteen, twenty, or even twenty-five years. She is fed, clothed, and trained in a house occupied only by geisha; and she passes the rest of her childhood under severe discipline. She is taught etiquette, grace, polite speech; she has daily lessons in dancing; and she is obliged to learn by heart a multitude of songs with their airs. Also she must learn games, the service of banquets and weddings, the art of dressing and looking beautiful. Whatever physical gifts she may have are carefully cultivated. Afterwards she is taught to handle musical

instruments: first, the little drum (*tsudzumi*), which cannot be sounded at all without considerable practice; then she learns to play the samisen a little, with a plectrum of tortoise-shell or ivory. At eight or nine years of age she attends banquets, chiefly as a drum-player. She is then the most charming little creature imaginable, and already knows how to fill your wine-cup exactly full, with a single toss of the bottle and without spilling a drop, between two taps of her drum.

Thereafter her discipline becomes more cruel. Her voice may be flexible enough, but lacks the requisite strength. In the iciest hours of winter nights, she must ascend to the roof of her dwelling-house, and there sing and play till the blood oozes from her fingers and the voice dies in her throat. The desired result is an atrocious cold. After a period of hoarse whispering, her voice changes its tone and strengthens. She is ready to become a public singer and dancer.

In this capacity she usually makes her first appearance at the age of twelve or thirteen. If pretty and skilful, her services will be much in demand, and her time paid for at the rate of twenty to twenty-five sen per hour. Then only do her purchasers begin to reimburse themselves for the time, expense, and trouble of her training; and they are not apt to be generous. For many years more all that she earns must pass into their hands. She can own nothing, not even her clothes.

At seventeen or eighteen she has made her artistic reputation. She has been at many hundreds of entertainments, and knows by sight all the important personages of her city, the character of each, the history of all. Her life has been chiefly a night life; rarely has she seen the sun rise since she became a dancer. She has learned to drink wine without ever losing her head, and to fast for seven or eight hours without ever feeling the worse. She has had many lovers. To a certain extent she is free to smile upon whom she pleases; but she has been well

taught, above all else to use her power of charm for her own advantage. She hopes to find Somebody able and willing to buy her freedom, – which Somebody would almost certainly thereafter discover many new and excellent meanings in those Buddhist texts that tell about the foolishness of love and the impermanency of all human relationships.

At this point of her career we may leave the geisha: thereafter her story is apt to prove unpleasant, unless she die young. Should that happen, she will have the obsequies of her class, and her memory will be preserved by divers curious rites.

Some time, perhaps, while wandering through Japanese streets at night, you hear sounds of music, a tinkling of samisen floating through the great gateway of a Buddhist temple, together with shrill voices of singing-girls; which may seem to you a strange happening. And the deep court is thronged with people looking and listening. Then, making your way through the press to the temple steps, you see two geisha seated upon the matting within, playing and singing, and a third dancing before a little table. Upon the table is an ihai, or mortuary tablet; in front of the tablet burns a little lamp, and incense in a cup of bronze; a small repast has been placed there, fruits and dainties, – such a repast as, upon festival occasions, it is the custom to offer to the dead. You learn that the kaimyō upon the tablet is that of a geisha; and that the comrades of the dead girl assemble in the temple on certain days to gladden her spirit with songs and dances. Then whosoever pleases may attend the ceremony free of charge.

But the dancing-girls of ancient times were not as the geisha of to-day. Some of them were called shirabyōshi; and their hearts were not extremely hard. They were beautiful; they wore queerly shaped caps bedecked with gold; they were clad

in splendid attire, and danced with swords in the dwellings of princes. And there is an old story about one of them which I think it worth while to tell.

§ 1

It was formerly, and indeed still is, a custom with young Japanese artists to travel on foot through various parts of the empire, in order to see and sketch the most celebrated scenery as well as to study famous art objects preserved in Buddhist temples, many of which occupy sites of extraordinary picturesqueness. It is to such wanderings, chiefly, that we owe the existence of those beautiful books of landscape views and life studies which are now so curious and rare, and which teach better than aught else that only the Japanese can paint Japanese scenery. After you have become acquainted with their methods of interpreting their own nature, foreign attempts in the same line will seem to you strangely flat and soulless. The foreign artist will give you realistic reflections of what he sees; but he will give you nothing more. The Japanese artist gives you that which he feels, – the mood of a season, the precise sensation of an hour and place; his work is qualified by a power of suggestiveness rarely found in the art of the West. The Occidental painter renders minute detail; he satisfies the imagination he evokes. But his Oriental brother either suppresses or idealizes detail, – steeps his distances in mist, bands his landscapes with cloud, makes of his experience a memory in which only the strange and the beautiful survive, with their sensations. He surpasses imagination, excites it, leaves it hungry with the hunger of charm perceived in glimpses only. Nevertheless, in such glimpses he is able to convey the feeling of a time, the character of a place, after a fashion that seems magical. He is a painter of recollections and of sensations rather than of clear-cut realities; and in this lies the secret of

his amazing power, – a power not to be appreciated by those who have never witnessed the scenes of his inspiration. He is above all things impersonal. His human figures are devoid of all individuality; yet they have inimitable merit as types embodying the characteristics of a class: the childish curiosity of the peasant, the shyness of the maiden, the fascination of the jorō, the self-consciousness of the samurai, the funny, placid prettiness of the child, the resigned gentleness of age. Travel and observation were the influences which developed this art; it was never a growth of studios.

A great many years ago, a young art student was travelling on foot from Kyōto to Yedo, over the mountains. The roads then were few and bad, and travel was so difficult compared to what it is now that a proverb was current, *Kawai ko wa tabi wo sasé* (A pet child should be made to travel). But the land was what it is to-day. There were the same forests of cedar and of pine, the same groves of bamboo, the same peaked villages with roofs of thatch, the same terraced rice-fields dotted with the great yellow straw hats of peasants bending in the slime. From the wayside, the same statues of Jizō smiled upon the same pilgrim figures passing to the same temples; and then, as now, of summer days, one might see naked brown children laughing in all the shallow rivers, and all the rivers laughing to the sun.

The young art student, however, was no *kawai ko*: he had already travelled a great deal, was inured to hard fare and rough lodging, and accustomed to make the best of every situation. But upon this journey he found himself, one evening after sunset, in a region where it seemed possible to obtain neither fare nor lodging of any sort, – out of sight of cultivated land. While attempting a short cut over a range to reach some village, he had lost his way.

There was no moon, and pine shadows made blackness all around him. The district into which he had wandered seemed utterly wild; there were no sounds but the humming of the wind in the pine-needles, and an infinite tinkling of bell-insects. He stumbled on, hoping to gain some river bank, which he could follow to a settlement. At last a stream abruptly crossed his way; but it proved to be a swift torrent pouring into a gorge between precipices. Obliged to retrace his steps, he resolved to climb to the nearest summit, whence he might be able to discern some sign of human life; but on reaching it he could see about him only a heaping of hills.

He had almost resigned himself to passing the night under the stars, when he perceived, at some distance down the farther slope of the hill he had ascended, a single thin yellow ray of light, evidently issuing from some dwelling. He made his way towards it, and soon discerned a small cottage, apparently a peasant's home. The light he had seen still streamed from it, through a chink in the closed storm-doors. He hastened forward, and knocked at the entrance.

§ 2

Not until he had knocked and called several times did he hear any stir within; then a woman's voice asked what was wanted. The voice was remarkably sweet, and the speech of the unseen questioner surprised him, for she spoke in the cultivated idiom of the capital. He responded that he was a student, who had lost his way in the mountains; that he wished, if possible, to obtain food and lodging for the night; and that if this could not be given, he would feel very grateful for information how to reach the nearest village, – adding that he had means enough to pay for the services of a guide. The voice, in return, asked several other questions, indicating extreme surprise that anyone could have reached the dwelling from the

direction he had taken. But his answers evidently allayed suspicion, for the inmate exclaimed: 'I will come in a moment. It would be difficult for you to reach any village to-night; and the path is dangerous.'

After a brief delay the storm-doors were pushed open, and a woman appeared with a paper lantern, which she so held as to illuminate the stranger's face, while her own remained in shadow. She scrutinized him in silence, then said briefly, 'Wait; I will bring water.' She fetched a wash-basin, set it upon the doorstep, and offered the guest a towel. He removed his sandals, washed from his feet the dust of travel, and was shown into a neat room which appeared to occupy the whole interior, except a small boarded space at the rear, used as a kitchen. A cotton zabuton was laid for him to kneel upon, and a brazier set before him.

It was only then that he had a good opportunity of observing his hostess, and he was startled by the delicacy and beauty of her features. She might have been three or four years older than he, but was still in the bloom of youth. Certainly she was not a peasant girl. In the same singularly sweet voice she said to him: 'I am now alone, and I never receive guests here. But I am sure it would be dangerous for you to travel farther to-night. There are some peasants in the neighbourhood, but you cannot find your way to them in the dark without a guide. So I can let you stay here until morning. You will not be comfortable, but I can give you a bed. And I suppose you are hungry. There is only some shōjin-ryōri,[1] – not at all good, but you are welcome to it.'

The traveller was quite hungry, and only too glad of the offer. The young woman kindled a little fire, prepared a few dishes in silence, – stewed leaves of na, some aburagé, some

[1] Buddhist food, containing no animal substance. Some kinds of shōjin-ryōri are quite appetizing.

kampyō, and a bowl of coarse rice, – and quickly set the meal before him, apologizing for its quality. But during his repast she spoke scarcely at all, and her reserved manner embarrassed him. As she answered the few questions he ventured upon merely by a bow or by a solitary word, he soon refrained from attempting to press the conversation.

Meanwhile he had observed that the small house was spotlessly clean, and the utensils in which his food was served were immaculate. The few cheap objects in the apartment were pretty. The fusuma of the oshiire and zendana[1] were of white paper only, but had been decorated with large Chinese characters exquisitely written, characters suggesting, according to the law of such decoration, the favourite themes of the poet and artist: Spring Flowers, Mountain and Sea, Summer Rain, Sky and Stars, Autumn Moon, River Water, Autumn Breeze. At one side of the apartment stood a kind of low altar, supporting a butsudan, whose tiny lacquered doors, left open, showed a mortuary tablet within, before which a lamp was burning between offerings of wild flowers. And above this household shrine hung a picture of more than common merit, representing the Goddess of Mercy, wearing the moon for her aureole.

As the student ended his little meal the young woman observed: 'I cannot offer you a good bed, and there is only a paper mosquito-curtain. The bed and the curtain are mine, but to-night I have many things to do, and shall have no time to sleep; therefore I beg you will try to rest, though I am not able to make you comfortable.'

He then understood that she was, for some strange reason, entirely alone, and was voluntarily giving up her only bed to him upon a kindly pretext. He protested honestly against such an excess of hospitality, and assured her that he could sleep

[1] The terms *oshiire* and *zendana* might be partly rendered by 'wardrobe' and 'cupboard.' The *fusuma* are sliding screens serving as doors.

quite soundly anywhere on the floor, and did not care about the mosquitoes. But she replied, in the tone of an elder sister, that he must obey her wishes. She really had something to do, and she desired to be left by herself as soon as possible; therefore, understanding him to be a gentleman, she expected he would suffer her to arrange matters in her own way. To this he could offer no objection, as there was but one room. She spread the mattress on the floor, fetched a wooden pillow, suspended her paper mosquito-curtain, unfolded a large screen on the side of the bed toward the butsudan, and then bade him good-night in a manner that assured him she wished him to retire at once; which he did, not without some reluctance at the thought of all the trouble he had unintentionally caused her.

§ 3

Unwilling as the young traveller felt to accept a kindness involving the sacrifice of another's repose, he found the bed more than comfortable. He was very tired, and had scarcely laid his head upon the wooden pillow before he forgot everything in sleep.

Yet only a little while seemed to have passed when he was awakened by a singular sound. It was certainly the sound of feet, but not of feet walking softly. It seemed rather the sound of feet in rapid motion, as of excitement. Then it occurred to him that robbers might have entered the house. As for himself, he had little to fear because he had little to lose. His anxiety was chiefly for the kind person who had granted him hospitality. Into each side of the paper mosquito-curtain a small square of brown netting had been fitted, like a little window, and through one of these he tried to look; but the high screen stood between him and whatever was going on. He thought of calling, but this impulse was checked by the re-

flection that in case of real danger it would be both useless and imprudent to announce his presence before understanding the situation. The sounds which had made him uneasy continued, and were more and more mysterious. He resolved to prepare for the worst, and to risk his life, if necessary, in order to defend his young hostess. Hastily girding up his robes, he slipped noiselessly from under the paper curtain, crept to the edge of the screen, and peeped. What he saw astonished him extremely.

Before her illuminated butsudan the young woman, magnificently attired, was dancing all alone. Her costume he recognized as that of a shirabyōshi, though much richer than any he had ever seen worn by a professional dancer. Marvellously enhanced by it, her beauty, in that lonely time and place, appeared almost supernatural; but what seemed to him even more wonderful was her dancing. For an instant he felt the tingling of a weird doubt. The superstitions of peasants, the legends of Fox-women, flashed before his imagination; but the sight of the Buddhist shrine, of the sacred picture, dissipated the fancy, and shamed him for the folly of it. At the same time he became conscious that he was watching something she had not wished him to see, and that it was his duty, as her guest, to return at once behind the screen; but the spectacle fascinated him. He felt, with not less pleasure than amazement, that he was looking upon the most accomplished dancer he had ever seen; and the more he watched, the more the witchery of her grace grew upon him. Suddenly she paused, panting, unfastened her girdle, turned in the act of doffing her upper robe, and started violently as her eyes encountered his own.

He tried at once to excuse himself to her. He said he had been suddenly awakened by the sound of quick feet, which sound had caused him some uneasiness, chiefly for her sake,

because of the lateness of the hour and the lonesomeness of the place. Then he confessed his surprise at what he had seen, and spoke of the manner in which it had attracted him. 'I beg you,' he continued, 'to forgive my curiosity, for I cannot help wondering who you are, and how you could have become so marvellous a dancer. All the dancers of Saikyō I have seen, yet I have never seen among the most celebrated of them a girl who could dance like you; and once I had begun to watch you, I could not take away my eyes.'

At first she had seemed angry, but before he had ceased to speak her expression changed. She smiled, and seated herself before him. 'No, I am not angry with you,' she said. 'I am only sorry that you should have watched me, for I am sure you must have thought me mad when you saw me dancing that way, all by myself; and now I must tell you the meaning of what you have seen.'

So she related her story. Her name he remembered to have heard as a boy, – her professional name, the name of the most famous of shirabyōshi, the darling of the capital, who, in the zenith of her fame and beauty, had suddenly vanished from public life, none knew whither or why. She had fled from wealth and fortune with a youth who loved her. He was poor, but between them they possessed enough means to live simply and happily in the country. They built a little house in the mountains, and there for a number of years they existed only for each other. He adored her. One of his greatest pleasures was to see her dance. Each evening he would play some favourite melody, and she would dance for him. But one long cold winter he fell sick, and, in spite of her tender nursing, died. Since then she had lived alone with the memory of him, performing all those small rites of love and homage with which the dead are honoured. Daily before his tablet she placed the customary offerings, and nightly danced to please him, as of

old. And this was the explanation of what the young traveller had seen. It was indeed rude, she continued, to have awakened her tired guest; but she had waited until she thought him soundly sleeping, and then she had tried to dance very, very lightly. So she hoped he would pardon her for having unintentionally disturbed him.

When she had told him all, she made ready a little tea, which they drank together; then she entreated him so plaintively to please her by trying to sleep again that he found himself obliged to go back, with many sincere apologies, under the paper mosquito-curtain.

He slept well and long; the sun was high before he woke. On rising, he found prepared for him a meal as simple as that of the evening before, and he felt hungry. Nevertheless he ate sparingly, fearing the young woman might have stinted herself in thus providing for him; and then he made ready to depart. But when he wanted to pay her for what he had received, and for all the trouble he had given her, she refused to take anything from him, saying: 'What I had to give was not worth money, and what I did was done for kindness alone. So I pray that you will try to forget the discomfort you suffered here, and will remember only the good-will of one who had nothing to offer.'

He still endeavoured to induce her to accept something; but at last, finding that his insistence only gave her pain, he took leave of her with such words as he could find to express his gratitude, and not without a secret regret, for her beauty and her gentleness had charmed him more than he would have liked to acknowledge to any but herself. She indicated to him the path to follow, and watched him descend the mountain until he had passed from sight. An hour later he found himself upon a highway with which he was familiar. Then a sudden remorse touched him: he had forgotten to tell her his

name. For an instant he hesitated; then said to himself, 'What matters it? I shall be always poor.' And he went on.

§ 4

Many years passed by, and many fashions with them; and the painter became old. But ere becoming old he had become famous. Princes, charmed by the wonder of his work, had vied with one another in giving him patronage; so that he grew rich, and possessed a beautiful dwelling of his own in the City of the Emperors. Young artists from many provinces were his pupils, and lived with him, serving him in all things while receiving his instruction; and his name was known throughout the land.

Now, there came one day to his house an old woman, who asked to speak with him. The servants, seeing that she was meanly dressed and of miserable appearance, took her to be some common beggar, and questioned her roughly. But when she answered: 'I can tell to no one except your master why I have come,' they believed her mad, and deceived her, saying: 'He is not now in Saikyō, nor do we know how soon he will return.'

But the old woman came again and again, – day after day, and week after week, – each time being told something that was not true: 'To-day he is ill,' or, 'To-day he is very busy,' or, 'To-day he has much company, and therefore cannot see you.' Nevertheless she continued to come, always at the same hour each day, and always carrying a bundle wrapped in a ragged covering; and the servants at last thought it were best to speak to their master about her. So they said to him: 'There is a very old woman, whom we take to be a beggar, at our lord's gate. More than fifty times she has come, asking to see our lord, and refusing to tell us why, – saying that she can

tell her wishes only to our lord. And we have tried to discourage her, as she seemed to be mad; but she always comes. Therefore we have presumed to mention the matter to our lord, in order that we may learn what is to be done hereafter.'

Then the Master answered sharply: 'Why did none of you tell me of this before?' and went out himself to the gate, and spoke very kindly to the woman, remembering how he also had been poor. And he asked her if she desired alms of him.

But she answered that she had no need of money or of food, and only desired that he would paint for her a picture. He wondered at her wish, and bade her enter his house. So she entered into the vestibule, and, kneeling there, began to untie the knots of the bundle she had brought with her. When she had unwrapped it, the painter perceived curious rich quaint garments of silk broidered with designs in gold, yet much frayed and discoloured by wear and time, – the wreck of a wonderful costume of other days, the attire of a shirabyōshi.

While the old woman unfolded the garments one by one, and tried to smooth them with her trembling fingers, a memory stirred in the Master's brain, thrilled dimly there a little space, then suddenly lighted up. In that soft shock of recollection, he saw again the lonely mountain dwelling in which he had received unremunerated hospitality, – the tiny room prepared for his rest, the paper mosquito-curtain, the faintly burning lamp before the Buddhist shrine, the strange beauty of one dancing there alone in the dead of the night. Then, to the astonishment of the aged visitor, he, the favoured of princes, bowed low before her, and said: 'Pardon my rudeness in having forgotten your face for a moment; but it is more than forty years since we last saw each other. Now I remember you well. You received me once at your house. You gave up to me the

only bed you had. I saw you dance, and you told me all your story. You had been a shirabyōshi, and I have not forgotten your name.'

He uttered it. She, astonished and confused, could not at first reply to him, for she was old and had suffered much, and her memory had begun to fail. But he spoke more and more kindly to her, and reminded her of many things which she had told him, and described to her the house in which she had lived alone, so that at last she also remembered; and she answered, with tears of pleasure: 'Surely the Divine One who looketh down above the sound of prayer has guided me. But when my unworthy home was honoured by the visit of the august Master, I was not as I now am. And it seems to me like a miracle of our Lord Buddha that the Master should remember me.'

Then she related the rest of her simple story. In the course of years, she had become, through poverty, obliged to part with her little house; and in her old age she had returned alone to the great city, in which her name had long been forgotten. It had caused her much pain to lose her home; but it grieved her still more that, in becoming weak and old, she could no longer dance each evening before the butsudan, to please the spirit of the dead whom she had loved. Therefore she wanted to have a picture of herself painted, in the costume and the attitude of the dance, that she might suspend it before the butsudan. For this she had prayed earnestly to Kwannon. And she had sought out the Master because of his fame as a painter, since she desired, for the sake of the dead, no common work, but a picture painted with great skill; and she had brought her dancing attire, hoping that the Master might be willing to paint her therein.

He listened to all with a kindly smile, and answered her: 'It will be only a pleasure for me to paint the picture which

you want. This day I have something to finish which cannot be delayed. But if you will come here to-morrow, I will paint you exactly as you wish, and as well as I am able.'

But she said: 'I have not yet told to the Master the thing which most troubles me. And it is this, – that I can offer in return for so great a favour nothing except these dancer's clothes; and they are of no value in themselves, though they were costly once. Still, I hoped the Master might be willing to take them, seeing they have become curious; for there are no more shirabyōshi, and the maiko of these times wear no such robes.'

'Of that matter,' the good painter exclaimed, 'you must not think at all! No; I am glad to have this present chance of paying a small part of my old debt to you. So to-morrow I will paint you just as you wish.'

She prostrated herself thrice before him, uttering thanks and then said, 'Let my lord pardon, though I have yet something more to say. For I do not wish that he should paint me as I now am, but only as I used to be when I was young, as my lord knew me.'

He said: 'I remember well. You were very beautiful.'

Her wrinkled features lighted up with pleasure, as she bowed her thanks to him for those words. And she exclaimed: 'Then indeed all that I hoped and prayed for may be done! Since he thus remembers my poor youth, I beseech my lord to paint me, not as I now am, but as he saw me when I was not old and, as it has pleased him generously to say, not uncomely. O Master, make me young again! Make me seem beautiful that I may seem beautiful to the soul of him for whose sake I, the unworthy, beseech this! He will see the Master's work: he will forgive me that I can no longer dance.'

Once more the Master bade her have no anxiety, and said: 'Come to-morrow, and I will paint you. I will make a picture

of you just as you were when I saw you, a young and beautiful shirabyōshi, and I will paint it as carefully and as skilfully as if I were painting the picture of the richest person in the land. Never doubt, but come.'

§ 5

So the aged dancer came at the appointed hour; and upon soft white silk the artist painted a picture of her. Yet not a picture of her as she seemed to the Master's pupils, but the memory of her as she had been in the days of her youth, bright-eyed as a bird, lithe as a bamboo, dazzling as a tennin[1] in her raiment of silk and gold. Under the magic of the Master's brush, the vanished grace returned, the faded beauty bloomed again. When the kakemono had been finished, and stamped with his seal, he mounted it richly upon silken cloth, and fixed to it rollers of cedar with ivory weights, and a silken cord by which to hang it; and he placed it in a little box of white wood, and so gave it to the shirabyōshi. And he would also have presented her with a gift of money. But though he pressed her earnestly, he could not persuade her to accept his help. 'Nay,' she made answer, with tears, 'indeed I need nothing. The picture only I desired. For that I prayed; and now my prayer has been answered, and I know that I never can wish for anything more in this life, and that if I come to die thus desiring nothing, to enter upon the way of Buddha will not be difficult. One thought alone causes me sorrow, – that I have nothing to offer to the Master but this dancer's apparel, which is indeed of little worth, though I beseech him to accept it; and I will pray each day that his future life may be a life of happiness, because of the wondrous kindness which he has done me.'

[1] *Tennin*, a 'Sky-Maiden,' a Buddhist angel.

'Nay,' protested the painter, smiling, 'what is it that I have done? Truly nothing. As for the dancer's garments, I will accept them, if that can make you more happy. They will bring back pleasant memories of the night I passed in your home, when you gave up all your comforts for my unworthy sake, and yet would not suffer me to pay for that which I used; and for that kindness I hold myself to be still in your debt. But now tell me where you live, so that I may see the picture in its place.' For he had resolved within himself to place her beyond the reach of want.

But she excused herself with humble words, and would not tell him, saying that her dwelling-place was too mean to be looked upon by such as he; and then, with many prostrations, she thanked him again and again, and went away with her treasure, weeping for joy.

Then the Master called to one of his pupils: 'Go quickly after that woman, but so that she does not know herself followed, and bring me word where she lives.' So the young man followed her, unperceived.

He remained long away, and when he returned he laughed in the manner of one obliged to say something which it is not pleasant to hear, and he said: 'That woman, O Master, I followed out of the city to the dry bed of the river, near to the place where criminals are executed. There I saw a hut such as an Eta might dwell in, and that is where she lives. A forsaken and filthy place, O Master!'

'Nevertheless,' the painter replied, 'to-morrow you will take me to that forsaken and filthy place. What time I live she shall not suffer for food or clothing or comfort.'

And as all wondered, he told them the story of the shirabyōshi, after which it did not seem to them that his words were strange.

§ 6

On the morning of the day following, an hour after sunrise, the Master and his pupil took their way to the dry bed of the river, beyond the verge of the city, to the place of outcasts.

The entrance of the little dwelling they found closed by a single shutter, upon which the Master tapped many times without evoking a response. Then, finding the shutter unfastened from within, he pushed it slightly aside, and called through the aperture. None replied, and he decided to enter. Simultaneously, with extraordinary vividness, there thrilled back to him the sensation of the very instant when, as a tired lad, he stood pleading for admission to the lonesome little cottage among the hills.

Entering alone softly, he perceived that the woman was lying there, wrapped in a single thin and tattered futon, seemingly asleep. On a rude shelf he recognized the butsudan of forty years before, with its tablet, and now, as then, a tiny lamp was burning in front of the kaimyō. The kakemono of the Goddess of Mercy with her lunar aureole was gone, but on the wall facing the shrine he beheld his own dainty gift suspended, and an ofuda beneath it, – an ofuda of Hito-koto-Kwannon,[1] – that Kwannon unto whom it is unlawful to pray more than once, as she answers but a single prayer. There was little else in the desolate dwelling; only the garments of a female pilgrim, and a mendicant's staff and bowl.

But the Master did not pause to look at these things, for he desired to awaken and to gladden the sleeper, and he called her name cheerily twice and thrice.

Then suddenly he saw that she was dead, and he wondered

[1] Her shrine is at Nara, – not far from the temple of the giant Buddha.

while he gazed upon her face, for it seemed less old. A vague sweetness, like a ghost of youth, had returned to it; the lines of sorrow had been softened, the wrinkles strangely smoothed, by the touch of a phantom Master mightier than he.

CHAPTER EIGHT

From Hōki to Oki

★

§ 1

I RESOLVED to go to Oki.

Not even a missionary had ever been to Oki, and its shores had never been seen by European eyes, except on those rare occasions when men-of-war steamed by them, cruising about the Japanese Sea. This alone would have been a sufficient reason for going there; but a stronger one was furnished for me by the ignorance of the Japanese themselves about Oki. Excepting the far-away Riu-Kiu, or Loo-Choo Islands, inhabited by a somewhat different race with a different language, the least-known portion of the Japanese Empire is perhaps Oki. Since it belongs to the same prefectural district as Izumo, each new governor of Shimane-Ken is supposed to pay one visit to Oki after his inauguration; and the chief of police of the province sometimes goes there upon a tour of inspection. There are also some mercantile houses in Matsue and in other cities which send a commercial traveller to Oki once a year. Furthermore, there is quite a large trade with Oki, – almost all carried on by small sailing-vessels. But such official and commercial communications have not been of a nature to make Oki much better known to-day than in the mediæval period of Japanese history. There are still current among the common people of the west coast extraordinary stories of Oki much like those about that fabulous Isle of Women, which figures so largely in the imaginative literature of various Oriental races. According to these old legends, the moral notions of the people of Oki were extremely fantastic: the most rigid ascetic could not dwell there and maintain his indifference to earthly pleasures; and, however wealthy at his arrival, the visiting stranger must soon return to his native land naked and

poor, because of the seductions of women. I had quite sufficient experiences of travel in queer countries to feel certain that all these marvellous stories signified nothing beyond the bare fact that Oki was a *terra incognita*; and I even felt inclined to believe that the average morals of the people of Oki – judging by those of the common folk of the western provinces – must be very much better than the morals of our ignorant classes at home.

Which I subsequently ascertained to be the case.

For some time I could find no one among my Japanese acquaintances to give me any information about Oki, beyond the fact that in ancient times it had been a place of banishment for the Emperors Go-Daigo and Go-Toba, dethroned by military usurpers, and this I already knew. But at last, quite unexpectedly, I found a friend – a former fellow-teacher – who had not only been to Oki, but was going there again within a few days about some business matter. We agreed to go together. His accounts of Oki differed very materially from those of the people who had never been there. The Oki folks, he said, were almost as much civilized as the Izumo folks: they, had nice towns and good public schools. They were very simple and honest beyond belief, and extremely kind to strangers. Their only boast was that of having kept their race unchanged since the time that the Japanese had first come to Japan; or, in more romantic phrase, since the Age of the Gods. They were all Shintōists, members of the Izumo Taisha faith, but Buddhism was also maintained among them, chiefly through the generous subscription of private individuals. And there were very comfortable hotels, so that I would feel quite at home.

He also gave me a little book about Oki, printed for the use of the Oki schools, from which I obtained the following brief summary of facts:

§ 2

Oki-no-Kuni, or the Land of Oki, consists of two groups of small islands in the Sea of Japan, about one hundred miles from the coast of Izumo. Dōzen, as the nearer group is termed, comprises, besides various islets, three islands lying close together: Chiburishima, or the Island of Chiburi (sometimes called Higashinoshima, or Eastern Island); Nishinoshima, or the Western Island, and Nakanoshima, or the Middle Island. Much larger than any of these is the principal island, Dōgo, which together with various islets, mostly uninhabited, form the remaining group. It is sometimes called Oki, – though the name Oki is more generally used for the whole archipelago.[1]

Officially, Oki is divided into four kōri or counties. Chiburi and Nishinoshima together form Chiburigōri; Nakanoshima, with an islet, makes Amagōri, and Dōgo is divided into Ochigōri and Sukigōri.

All these islands are very mountainous, and only a small portion of their area has ever been cultivated. Their chief sources of revenue are their fisheries, in which nearly the whole population has always been engaged from the most ancient times.

During the winter months the sea between Oki and the west coast is highly dangerous for small vessels, and in that season the islands hold little communication with the mainland. Only one passenger steamer runs to Oki from Sakai in Hōki. In a direct line, the distance from Sakai in Hōki to Saigo, the chief port of Oki, is said to be thirty-nine ri; but the steamer touches at the other islands upon her way thither.

There are quite a number of little towns, or rather villages,

[1] The names Dōzen or Tōzen, and Dōgo or Tōgo, signify 'the Before-Islands' and 'the Behind-Islands.'

in Oki, of which forty-five belong to Dōgo. The villages are nearly all situated upon the coast. There are large schools in the principal towns. The population of the islands is stated to be 30,196, but the respective populations of towns and villages are not given.

§ 3

From Matsue in Izumo to Sakai in Hōki is a trip of barely two hours by steamer. Sakai is the chief seaport of Shimane-Ken. It is an ugly little town, full of unpleasant smells; it exists only as a port; it has no industries, scarcely any shops, and only one Shintō temple of small dimensions and smaller interest. Its principal buildings are warehouses, pleasure resorts for sailors, and a few large dingy hotels, which are always overcrowded with guests waiting for steamers to Ōsaka, to Bakkan, to Hamada, to Niigata, and various other ports. On this coast no steamers run regularly anywhere; their owners attach no business value whatever to punctuality, and guests have usually to wait for a much longer time than they could possibly have expected, and the hotels are glad.

But the harbour is beautiful, – a long frith between the high land of Izumo and the low coast of Hōki. It is perfectly sheltered from storms, and deep enough to admit all but the largest steamers. The ships can lie close to the houses, and the harbour is nearly always thronged with all sorts of craft, from junks to steam packets of the latest construction.

My friend and I were lucky enough to secure back rooms at the best hotel. Back rooms are the best in nearly all Japanese buildings: at Sakai they have the additional advantage of overlooking the busy wharves and the whole luminous bay, beyond which the Izumo hills undulate in huge green billows against the sky. There was much to see and to be amused at. Steamers

and sailing craft of all sorts were lying two and three deep before the hotel, and the naked dock labourers were loading and unloading in their own peculiar way. These men are recruited from among the strongest peasantry of Hōki and of Izumo, and some were really fine men, over whose brown backs the muscles rippled at every movement. They were assisted by boys of fifteen or sixteen apparently, – apprentices learning the work, but not yet strong enough to bear heavy burdens. I noticed that nearly all had bands of blue cloth bound about their calves to keep the veins from bursting. And all sang as they worked. There was one curious alternate chorus, in which the men in the hold gave the signal by chanting '*dokoe, dokoe!*' (haul away!) and those at the hatch responded by improvisations on the appearance of each package as it ascended:

Dokoe, dokoe!
Onnago no ko da.
Dokoe, dokoe!
Oya da yo, oya da yo.
Dokoe, dokoe!
Choi-choi da, choi-choi da.
Dokoe, dokoe!
Matsue da, Matsueda.
Dokoe, dokoe!
Koetsumo Yonago da,[1] *etc.*

But this chant was for light quick work. A very different chant accompanied the more painful and slower labour of

[1] '*Dokoe, dokoe!*' 'This is only a woman's baby' (a very small package). '*Dokoe, dokoe!*' 'This is the daddy, this is the daddy' (a big package). '*Dokoe, dokoe!*' ''Tis very small, very small!' '*Dokoe, dokoe!*' 'This is for Matsue, this is for Matsue!' '*Dokoe, dokoe!*' 'This is for Koetsumo of Yonago,' etc.

loading heavy sacks and barrels upon the shoulders of the stronger men: –

Yan-yui!
Yan-yui!
Yan-yui!
Yan-yui!
Yoi-ya-sa-a-a-no-do-koe-shi![1]

Three men always lifted the weight. At the first *yan-yui* all stooped; at the second all took hold; the third signified ready; at the fourth the weight rose from the ground; and with the long cry of *yoiyasa no dokoeshi* it was dropped on the brawny shoulder waiting to receive it.

Among the workers was a naked laughing boy, with a fine contralto that rang out so merrily through all the din as to create something of a sensation in the hotel. A young woman, one of the guests, came out upon the balcony to look, and exclaimed: 'That boy's voice is RED,' – whereat everybody smiled. Under the circumstances I thought the observation very expressive, although it recalled a certain famous story about scarlet and the sound of a trumpet, which does not seem nearly so funny now as it did at a time when we knew less about the nature of light and sound.

The Oki steamer arrived the same afternoon, but she could not approach the wharf, and I could only obtain a momentary glimpse of her stern through a telescope, with which I read the name, in English letters of gold, – OKI-SAIGO. Before I could obtain any idea of her dimensions, a huge black steamer from Nagasaki glided between, and moored right in the way.

[1] These words seem to have no more meaning than our 'yo-heave-ho.' *Yan-yui* is a cry used by all Izumo and Hōki sailors.

I watched the loading and unloading, and listened to the song of the boy with the red voice, until sunset, when all quit work; and after that I watched the Nagasaki steamer. She had made her way to our wharf as the other vessels moved out, and lay directly under the balcony. The captain and crew did not appear to be in a hurry about anything. They all squatted down together on the foredeck, where a feast was spread for them by lantern-light. Dancing-girls climbed on board and feasted with them, and sang to the sound of the samisen, and played with them the game of ken. Late into the night the feasting and the fun continued; and although an alarming quantity of sake was consumed, there was no roughness or boisterousness. But sake is the most soporific of wines; and by midnight only three of the men remained on deck. One of these had not taken any sake at all, but still desired to eat. Happily for him there climbed on board a night-walking mochiya with a box of mochi, which are cakes of rice-flour sweetened with native sugar. The hungry one bought all, and reproached the mochiya because there were no more, and offered, nevertheless, to share the mochi with his comrades. Whereupon the first to whom the offer was made answered somewhat after this manner:

'I-your-servant mochi-for this-world-in no-use-have. Sake-alone this-life-in if-there-be, nothing-beside-desirable-is.'

'For me-your-servant,' spake the other, 'Woman this-fleeting-life-in the-supreme-thing is; mochi-or-sake-for earthly-use have-I-none.'

But, having made all the mochi to disappear, he that had been hungry turned himself to the mochiya, and said: –

'O Mochiya San, I-your-servant Woman-or-sake-for earthly-requirement have-none. Mochi-than things better this-life-of-sorrow-in existence-have-not!'

§ 4

Early in the morning we were notified that the *Oki-Saigo* would start at precisely eight o'clock, and that we had better secure our tickets at once. The hotel-servant, according to Japanese custom, relieved us of all anxiety about baggage, etc., and bought our tickets: first-class fare, eighty sen. And after a hasty breakfast the hotel boat came under the window to take us away.

Warned by experience of the discomforts of European dress on Shimane steamers, I adopted Japanese costume and exchanged my shoes for sandals. Our boatmen sculled swiftly through the confusion of shipping and junkery; and as we cleared it I saw, far out in midstream, the joki waiting for us. Joki is a Japanese name for steam-vessel. The word had not yet impressed me as being capable of a sinister interpretation.

She seemed nearly as long as a harbour tug, though much more squabby; and she otherwise so much resembled the Lilliputian steamers of Lake Shinji, that I felt somewhat afraid of her, even for a trip of one hundred miles. But exterior inspection afforded no clue to the mystery of her inside. We reached her and climbed into her starboard through a small square hole. At once I found myself cramped in a heavily-roofed gangway, four feet high and two feet wide, and in the thick of a frightful squeeze, – passengers stifling in the effort to pull baggage three feet in diameter through the two-foot orifice. It was impossible to advance or retreat; and behind me the engine-room gratings were pouring wonderful heat into this infernal corridor. I had to wait with the back of my head pressed against the roof until, in some unimaginable way, all baggage and passengers had squashed and squeezed through. Then, reaching a doorway, I fell over a heap of sandals and geta, into the first-class cabin. It

was pretty, with its polished woodwork and mirrors; it was surrounded by divans five inches wide; and in the centre it was nearly six feet high. Such altitude would have been a cause for comparative happiness, but that from various polished bars of brass extended across the ceiling all kinds of small baggage, including two cages of singing-crickets (*chongisu*), had been carefully suspended. Furthermore the cabin was already extremely occupied: everybody, of course, on the floor, and nearly everybody lying at extreme length; and the heat struck me as being supernatural. Now they that go down to the sea in ships, out of Izumo and such places, for the purpose of doing business in great waters, are never supposed to stand up, but to squat in the ancient patient manner; and coast or lake steamers are constructed with a view to render this attitude only possible. Observing an open door in the port side of the cabin, I picked my way over a tangle of bodies and limbs, – among them a pair of fairy legs belonging to a dancing-girl, – and found myself presently in another gangway, also roofed, and choked up to the roof with baskets of squirming eels. Exit there was none: so I climbed back over all the legs and tried the starboard gangway a second time. Even during that short interval, it had been half filled with baskets of unhappy chickens. But I made a reckless dash over them, in spite of frantic cacklings which hurt my soul, and succeeded in finding a way to the cabin-roof. It was entirely occupied by water-melons, except one corner, where there was a big coil of rope. I put melons inside of the rope, and sat upon them in the sun. It was not comfortable; but I thought that there I might have some chance for my life in case of a catastrophe, and I was sure that even the gods could give no help to those below. During the squeeze I had got separated from my companion, but I was afraid to make any attempt to find him. Forward I saw the roof of the second cabin crowded with third-

class passengers squatting round a hibachi. To pass through them did not seem possible, and to retire would have involved the murder of either eels or chickens. Wherefore I sat upon the melons.

And the boat started, with a stunning scream. In another moment her funnel began to rain soot upon me, – for the so-called first-class cabin was well astern, – and then came small cinders mixed with the soot, and the cinders were occasionally red-hot. But I sat burning upon the water-melons for some time longer, trying to imagine a way of changing my position without committing another assault upon the chickens. Finally, I made a desperate endeavour to get to leeward of the volcano, and it was then for the first time that I began to learn the peculiarities of the joki. What I tried to sit on turned upside down, and what I tried to hold by instantly gave way, and always in the direction of overboard. Things clamped or rigidly braced to outward seeming proved, upon cautious examination, to be dangerously mobile; and things that, according to Occidental ideas, ought to have been movable, were fixed like the roots of the perpetual hills. In whatever direction a rope or stay could possibly have been stretched so as to make somebody unhappy, it was there. In the midst of these trials the frightful little craft began to swing, and the water-melons began to rush heavily to and fro, and I came to the conclusion that this joki had been planned and constructed by demons.

Which I stated to my friend. He had not only rejoined me quite unexpectedly, but had brought along with him one of the ship's boys to spread an awning above ourselves and the water-melons, so as to exclude cinders and sun.

'Oh, no!' he answered reproachfully. 'She was designed and built at Hyōgo, and really she might have been made much worse. . . .'

'I beg your pardon,' I interrupted; 'I don't agree with you at all.'

'Well, you will see for yourself,' he persisted. 'Her hull is good steel, and her little engine is wonderful; she can make her hundred miles in five hours. She is not very comfortable, but she is very swift and strong.'

'I would rather be in a sampan,' I protested, 'if there were rough weather.'

'But she never goes to sea in rough weather. If it only looks as if there might possibly be some rough weather, she stays in port. Sometimes she waits a whole month. She never runs any risks.'

I could not feel sure of it. But I soon forgot all discomforts, even the discomfort of sitting upon water-melons, in the delight of the divine day and the magnificent view that opened wider and wider before us, as we rushed from the long frith into the Sea of Japan, following the Izumo coast. There was no fleck in the soft blue vastness above, not one flutter on the metallic smoothness of the all-reflecting sea; if our little steamer rocked, it was doubtless because she had been overloaded. To port, the Izumo hills were flying by, a long, wild procession of broken shapes, sombre green, separating at intervals to form mysterious little bays, with fishing hamlets hiding in them. Leagues away to starboard, the Hōki shore receded into the naked white horizon, an ever-diminishing streak of warm blue edged with a thread-line of white, the gleam of a sand beach; and beyond it, in the centre, a vast shadowy pyramid loomed up into heaven, – the ghostly peak of Daisen.

My companion touched my arm to call my attention to a group of pine-trees on the summit of a peak to port, and laughed and sang a Japanese song. How swiftly we had been travelling I then for the first time understood, for I recognized the four famous pines of Mionoseki, on the windy heights

above the shrine of Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami. There used to be five trees: one was uprooted by a storm, and some Izumo poet wrote about the remaining four the words which my friend had sung:

Seki no gohon matsu
Ippun kirya, shihon;
Ato wa kirarenu
Miyōto matsu.

Which means: 'Of the five pines of Seki one has been cut, and four remain; and of these no one must now be cut, – they are wedded pairs.' And in Mionoseki there are sold beautiful little sake cups and sake bottles, upon which are pictures of the four pines, and above the pictures, in spidery text of gold, the verses, '*Seki no gohon matsu.*' These are for keepsakes, and there are many other curious and pretty souvenirs to buy in those pretty shops; porcelains bearing the picture of the Mionoseki temple, and metal clasps for tobacco pouches representing Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami trying to put a big tai-fish into a basket too small for it, and funny masks of glazed earthenware representing the laughing face of the god. For a jovial god is this Ebisu, or Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami, patron of honest labour and especially of fishers, though less of a laughter-lover than his father, the Great Deity of Kitzuki, about whom 'tis said: 'Whenever the happy laugh, the God rejoices.'

We passed the Cape, – the *Miho* of the *Kojiki*, – and the harbour of Mionoseki opened before us, showing its islanded shrine of Benten in the midst, and the crescent of quaint houses with their feet in the water, and the great torii and granite lions of the far-famed temple. Immediately a number of passengers rose to their feet, and, turning their faces toward the torii, began to clap their hands in Shintō prayer.

I said to my friend:

'There are fifty baskets full of chickens in the gangway; and yet these people are praying to Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami that nothing horrible may happen to this boat.'

'More likely,' he answered, 'they are praying for good-fortune; though there is a saying: "The gods only laugh when men pray to them for wealth." But of the Great Deity of Mionoseki there is a good story told. Once there was a very lazy man who went to Mionoseki and prayed to become rich. And the same night he saw the god in a dream; and the god laughed, and took off one of his own divine sandals, and told him to examine it. And the man saw that it was made of solid brass, but had a big hole worn through the sole of it. Then said the god: "You want to have money without working for it. I am a god; but I am never lazy. See! my sandals are of brass: yet I have worked and walked so much that they are quite worn out." '

§ 5

The beautiful bay of Mionoseki opens between two headlands: Cape Mio (or Miho, according to the archaic spelling) and the Cape of Jizō (Jizō-zaki), now most inappropriately called by the people 'The Nose of Jizō' (Jizō-no-hana). This Nose of Jizō is one of the most dangerous points of the coast in time of surf, and the great terror of small ships returning from Oki. There is nearly always a heavy swell there, even in fair weather. Yet as we passed the ragged promontory I was surprised to see the water still as glass. I felt suspicious of that noiseless sea: its soundlessness recalled the beautiful treacherous sleep of waves and winds which precedes a tropical hurricane. But my friend said:

'It may remain like this for weeks. In the sixth month and in the beginning of the seventh, it is usually very quiet; it is not

likely to become dangerous before the Bon. But there was a little squall last week at Mionoseki; and the people said that it was caused by the anger of the god.'

'Eggs?' I queried.

'No: a Kudan.'

'What is a Kudan?'

'Is it possible you never heard of the Kudan? The Kudan has the face of a man, and the body of a bull. Sometimes it is born of a cow, and that is a Sign-of-things-going-to-happen. And the Kudan always tells the truth. Therefore in Japanese letters and documents it is customary to use the phrase, *Kudan-no-gotoshi*, – "like the Kudan," – or "on the truth of the Kudan." '[1]

'But why was the God of Mionoseki angry about the Kudan?'

'People said it was a stuffed Kudan. I did not see it, so I cannot tell you how it was made. There was some travelling showmen from Ōsaka at Sakai. They had a tiger and many curious animals and the stuffed Kudan; and they took the Izumo Maru for Mionoseki. As the steamer entered the port a sudden squall came; and the priests of the temple said the god was angry because things impure – bones and parts of dead animals – had been brought to the town. And the show people were not even allowed to land: they had to go back to Sakai on the same steamer. And as soon as they had gone away, the sky became clear again, and the wind stopped blowing: so that some people thought what the priests had said was true.'

§ 6

Evidently there was much more moisture in the atmosphere than I had supposed. On really clear days Daisen can be dis-

[1] This curious meaning is not given in Japanese-English dictionaries, where the idiom is translated merely by the phrase 'as aforesaid.'

tinctly seen even from Oki; but we had scarcely passed the Nose of Jizō when the huge peak began to wrap itself in vapour of the same colour as the horizon; and in a few minutes it vanished, as a spectre might vanish. The effect of this sudden disappearance was very extraordinary; for only the peak passed from sight, and that which had veiled it could not be in any way distinguished from horizon and sky.

Meanwhile the *Oki-Saigo*, having reached the farthest outlying point of the coast upon her route, began to race in a straight line across the Japanese Sea. The green hills of Izumo fled away and turned blue, and the spectral shores of Hōki began to melt into the horizon, like bands of cloud. Then I was obliged to confess my surprise at the speed of the horrid little steamer. She moved, too, with scarcely any sound, so smooth was the working of her wonderful little engine. But she began to swing heavily, with deep, slow swingings. To the eye, the sea looked level as oil; but there were long invisible swells – ocean-pulses – that made themselves felt beneath the surface. Hōki evaporated; the Izumo hills turned grey, and their grey steadily paled as I watched them. They grew more and more colourless, – seemed to become transparent. And then they were not. Only blue sky and blue sea, welded together in the white horizon.

It was just as lonesome as if we had been a thousand leagues from land. And in that weirdness we were told some very lonesome things by an ancient mariner who found leisure to join us among the water-melons. He talked of the Hotoke-umi, and the ill-luck of being at sea on the sixteenth day of the seventh month. He told us that even the great steamers never went to sea during the Bon: no crew would venture to take a ship out then. And he related the following stories with such simple earnestness that I think he must have believed what he said :

'The first time I was very young. From Hokkaido we had sailed, and the voyage was long, and the winds turned against us. And the night of the sixteenth day fell, as we were working on over this very sea.

'And all at once in the darkness we saw behind us a great junk, – all white, – that we had not noticed till she was quite close to us. It made us feel queer, because she seemed to have come from nowhere. She was so near us that we could hear voices; and her hull towered up high above us. She seemed to be sailing very fast; but she came no closer. We shouted to her; but we got no answer. And while we were watching her, all of us became afraid, because she did not move like a real ship. The sea was terrible, and we were lurching and plunging; but that great junk never rolled. Just at the same moment that we began to feel afraid she vanished so quickly that we could scarcely believe we had really seen her at all.

'That was the first time. But four years ago I saw something still more strange. We were bound for Oki, in a junk, and the wind again delayed us, so that we were at sea on the sixteenth day. It was in the morning, a little before midday; the sky was dark, and the sea very ugly. All at once we saw a steamer running in our track, very quickly. She got so close to us that we could hear her engines, – *katakata, katakata!* – but we saw nobody on deck. Then she began to follow us, keeping exactly at the same distance, and whenever we tried to get out of her way she would turn after us and keep exactly in our wake. And then we suspected what she was. But we were not sure until she vanished. She vanished like a bubble, without making the least sound. None of us could say exactly when she disappeared. None of us saw her vanish. The strangest thing was that after she was gone we could still hear her engines working behind us, – *katakata, katakata, katakata!*

'That is all I saw. But I know others, sailors like myself,

who have seen more. Sometimes many ships will follow you, – though never at the same time. One will come close and vanish, then another, and then another. As long as they come behind you, you need never be afraid. But if you see a ship of that sort running *before* you, against the wind, that is very bad! It means that all on board will be drowned.'

§ 7

The luminous blankness circling us continued to remain unflecked for less than an hour. Then out of the horizon toward which we steamed, a small grey vagueness began to grow. It lengthened fast, and seemed a cloud. And a cloud it proved; but slowly, beneath it, blue filmy shapes began to define against the whiteness, and sharpened into a chain of mountains. They grew taller and bluer, – a little sierra, with one paler shape towering in the middle to thrice the height of the rest, and filleted with cloud, – Takuhizan, the sacred mountain of Oki, in the island Nishinoshima.

Takuhizan has legends, which I learned from my friend. Upon its summit stands an ancient shrine of the deity Gongen-Sama. And it is said that upon the thirty-first night of the twelfth month three ghostly fires arise from the sea and ascend to the place of the shrine, and enter the stone lanterns which stand before it, and there remain, burning like lamps. These lights do not arise at once, but separately, from the sea, and rise to the top of the peak one by one. The people go out in boats to see the lights mount from the water. But only those whose hearts are pure can see them; those who have evil thoughts or desires look for the holy fires in vain.

Before us, as we steamed on, the sea-surface appeared to become suddenly speckled with queer craft previously invisible, – light, long fishing-boats, with immense square sails of a beautiful yellow colour. I could not help remarking to my

comrade how pretty those sails were; he laughed, and told me they were made of old tatami.[1] I examined them through a telescope, and found that they were exactly what he had said, – woven straw coverings of old floor-mats. Nevertheless, that first tender yellow sprinkling of Oki sails over the soft blue water was a charming sight.

They fleeted by, like a passing of yellow butterflies, and the sea was void again. Gradually, a little to port, a point in the approaching line of blue cliffs shaped itself and changed colour, – dull green above, reddish grey below; it defined into a huge rock, with a dark patch on its face, but the rest of the land remained blue. The dark patch blackened as we came nearer, – a great gap full of shadow. Then the blue cliffs beyond also turned green, and their bases reddish grey. We passed to the right of the huge rock, which proved to be a detached and uninhabited islet, Hakashima; and in another moment we were steaming into the archipelago of Oki, between the lofty islands Chiburishima and Nakashima.

§ 8

The first impression was almost uncanny. Rising sheer from the flood on either hand, the tall green silent hills stretched

[1] The floor of a Japanese dwelling might be compared to an immense but very shallow wooden tray, divided into compartments corresponding to the various rooms. These divisions are formed by grooved and polished woodwork, several inches above the level, and made for the accommodation of the fusuma, or sliding screens, separating room from room. The compartments are filled up level with the partitions with tatami, or mats about the thickness of light mattresses, covered with beautifully woven rice-straw. The squared edges of the mats fit exactly together, and as the mats are not made for the house, but the house for the mats, all tatami are exactly the same size. The fully finished floor of each room is thus like a great soft bed. No shoes, of course, can be worn in a Japanese house. As soon as the mats become in the least soiled they are replaced by new ones.

away before us, changing tint through the summer vapour, to form a fantastic vista of blue cliffs and peaks and promontories. There was not one sign of human life. Above their pale bases of naked rock the mountains sloped up beneath a sombre wildness of dwarf vegetation. There was absolutely no sound, except the sound of the steamer's tiny engine, – *poum-poum, poum! poum-poum, poum!* like the faint tapping of a geisha's drum. And this savage silence continued for miles: only the absence of lofty timber gave evidence that those peaked hills had ever been trodden by human foot. But all at once, to the left, in a mountain wrinkle, a little grey hamlet appeared; and the steamer screamed and stopped, while the hills repeated the scream seven times.

This settlement was Chiburimura, of Chiburishima (Nakashima being the island to starboard), – evidently nothing more than a fishing station. First a wharf of uncemented stone rising from the cove like a wall; then great trees through which one caught sight of a torii before some Shintō shrine, and of a dozen houses climbing the hollow hill one behind another, roof beyond roof; and above these some terraced patches of tilled ground in the midst of desolation: that was all. The packet halted to deliver mail, and passed on.

But then, contrary to expectation, the scenery became more beautiful. The shores on either side at once receded and heightened: we were traversing an inland sea bounded by three lofty islands. At first the way before us had seemed barred by vapoury hills; but as these, drawing nearer, turned green, there suddenly opened magnificent chasms between them on both sides, – mountain-gates revealing league-long wondrous vistas of peaks and cliffs and capes of a hundred blues, ranging away from velvety indigo into far tones of exquisite and spectral delicacy. A tinted haze made dreamy all remotenesses, and veiled with illusions of colour the rugged nudities of rock.

The beauty of the scenery of Western and Central Japan is not as the beauty of scenery in other lands; it has a peculiar character of its own. Occasionally the foreigner may find memories of former travel suddenly stirred to life by some view on a mountain road, or some stretch of beetling coast seen through a fog of spray. But this illusion of resemblance vanishes as swiftly as it comes; details immediately define into strangeness, and you become aware that the remembrance was evoked by form only, never by colour. Colours indeed there are which delight the eye, but not colours of mountain verdure, not colours of the land. Cultivated plains, expanses of growing rice, may offer some approach to warmth of green; but the whole general tone of this nature is dusky; the vast forests are sombre; the tints of grasses are harsh or dull. Fiery greens, such as burn in tropical scenery, do not exist; and blossom-bursts take a more exquisite radiance by contrast with the heavy tones of the vegetation out of which they flame. Outside of parks and gardens and cultivated fields, there is a singular absence of warmth and tenderness in the tints of verdure; and nowhere need you hope to find any such richness of green as that which makes the loveliness of an English lawn.

Yet these Oriental landscapes possess charms of colour extraordinary, – phantom-colour, delicate, elfish, indescribable, – created by the wonderful atmosphere. Vapours enchant the distances, bathing peaks in bewitchments of blue and grey of a hundred tones, transforming naked cliffs to amethyst, stretching spectral gauzes across the topazine morning, magnifying the splendour of noon by effacing the horizon, filling the evening with smoke of gold, bronzing the waters, banding the sundown with ghostly purple and green of nacre. Now, the Old Japanese artists who made those marvellous *ehon* – those picture-books which have now become so rare – tried to fix the

sensation of these enchantments in colour, and they were successful in their backgrounds to a degree almost miraculous. For which very reason some of their foregrounds have been a puzzle to foreigners unacquainted with certain features of Japanese agriculture. You will see blazing saffron-yellow fields, faint purple plains, crimson and snow-white trees, in those old picture-books; and perhaps you will exclaim: 'How absurd!' But if you knew Japan you would cry out: 'How deliciously real!' For you would know those fields of burning yellow are fields of flowering rape, and the purple expanses are fields of blossoming miyako, and the snow-white or crimson trees are not fanciful, but represent faithfully certain phenomena of efflorescence peculiar to the plum-trees and the cherry-trees of the country. But these chromatic extravaganzas can be witnessed only during very brief periods of particular seasons: throughout the greater part of the year the foreground of an inland landscape is apt to be dull enough in the matter of colour.

It is the mists that make the magic of the backgrounds; yet even without them there is a strange, wild, dark beauty in Japanese landscapes, a beauty not easily defined in words. The secret of it must be sought in the extraordinary lines of the mountains, in the strangely abrupt crumpling and jagging of the ranges; no two masses closely resembling each other, every one having a fantasticality of its own. Where the chains reach to any considerable height, softly swelling lines are rare: the general characteristic is abruptness, and the charm is the charm of Irregularity.

Doubtless this weird Nature first inspired the Japanese with their unique sense of the value of irregularity in decoration, – taught them that single secret of composition which distinguishes their art from all other art, and which Professor Chamberlain has said it is their special mission to teach to the

Occident.[1] Certainly, whoever has once learned to feel the beauty and significance of the Old Japanese decorative art can find thereafter little pleasure in the corresponding art of the West. What he has really learned is that Nature's greatest charm is irregularity. And perhaps something of no small value might be written upon the question whether the highest charm of human life and work is not also irregularity.

§ 9

From Chiburimura we made steam west for the port of Urago, which is in the island of Nishinoshima. As we approached it Takuhizan came into imposing view. Far away it had seemed a soft and beautiful shape; but as its blue tones evaporated its aspect became rough and even grim: an enormous jagged bulk all robed in sombre verdure, through which, as through tatters, there protruded here and there naked rock of the wildest shapes. One fragment, I remember, as it caught the slanting sun upon the irregularities of its summit, seemed an immense grey skull. At the base of this mountain, and facing the shore of Nakashima, rises a pyramidal mass of rock, covered with scraggy undergrowth, and several hundred feet in height, – Mongakuzan. On its desolate summit stands a little shrine.

'Takuhizan' signifies The Fire-burning Mountain, – a name due perhaps either to the legend of its ghostly fires, or to some ancient memory of its volcanic period. 'Mongakuzan' means The Mountain of Mongaku, – Mongaku Shōnin, the great monk. It is said that Mongaku Shōnin fled to Oki, and that he dwelt alone upon the top of that mountain many years, doing penance for his deadly sin. Whether he really ever visited Oki, I am not able to say; there are traditions which

[1] See article on Art in his *Things Japanese*.

declare the contrary. But the peaklet has borne his name for hundreds of years.

Now this is the story of Mongaku Shōnin:

Many centuries ago, in the city of Kyōto, there was a captain of the garrison whose name was Endō Moritō. He saw and loved the wife of a noble samurai; and when she refused to listen to his desires, he vowed that he would destroy her family unless she consented to the plan which he submitted to her. The plan was that upon a certain night she should suffer him to enter her house and to kill her husband; after which she was to become his wife.

But she, pretending to consent, devised a noble stratagem to save her honour. For, after having persuaded her husband to absent himself from the city, she wrote to Endō a letter, bidding him come upon a certain night to the house. And on that night she clad herself in her husband's robes, and made her hair like the hair of a man, and laid herself down in her husband's place, and pretended to sleep.

And Endō came in the dead of the night with his sword drawn, and smote off the head of the sleeper at a blow, and seized it by the hair and lifted it up and saw it was the head of the woman he had loved and wronged.

Then a great remorse came upon him, and hastening to a neighbouring temple, he confessed his sin, and did penance and cut off his hair, and became a monk, taking the name of Mongaku. And in after years he attained to great holiness, so that folk still pray to him, and his memory is venerated throughout the land.

Now at Asakusa in Tōkyō, in one of the curious little streets which lead to the great temple of Kwannon the Merciful, there are always wonderful images to be seen, – figures that seem alive, though made of wood only, – figures illustrating the ancient legends of Japan. And there you may see Endō stand-

ing: in his right hand the reeking sword; in his left the head of a beautiful woman. The face of the woman you may forget soon, because it is only beautiful. But the face of Endō you will not forget, because it is naked hell.

§ 10

Urago is a queer little town, perhaps quite as large as Mionoseki, and built, like Mionoseki, on a narrow ledge at the base of a steep semicircle of hills. But it is much more primitive and colourless than Mionoseki; and its houses are still more closely cramped between cliffs and water, so that its streets, or rather alleys, are no wider than gangways. As we cast anchor, my attention was suddenly riveted by a strange spectacle, – a white wilderness of long fluttering vague shapes, in a cemetery on the steep hillside, rising by terraces high above the roofs of the town. The cemetery was full of grey haka and images of divinities; and over every haka there was a curious white paper banner fastened to a thin bamboo pole. Through a glass one could see that these banners were inscribed with Buddhist texts, – '*Namur-myō-hō-renge-kyō*'; '*Namu Amida Butsu*'; '*Namu Daiji Dai-hi Kwan-ze-on Bosatsu*,' – and other holy words. Upon inquiry I learned that it was an Urago custom to place these banners every year above the graves during one whole month preceding the Festival of the Dead, together with various other ornamental or symbolic things.

The water was full of naked swimmers, who shouted laughing welcomes; and a host of light, swift boats, sculled by naked fishermen, darted out to look for passengers and freight. It was my first chance to observe the physique of Oki islanders; and I was much impressed by the vigorous appearance of both men and boys. The adults seemed to me of a taller and more powerful type than the men of the Izumo coast; and not a few of those brown backs and shoulders displayed, in the

motion of sculling, what is comparatively rare in Japan, even among men picked for heavy labour, – a magnificent development of muscles.

As the steamer stopped an hour at Urago, we had time to dine ashore in the chief hotel. It was a very clean and pretty hotel, and the fare infinitely superior to that of the hotel at Sakai. Yet the price charged was only seven sen; and the old landlord refused to accept the whole of the chadai-gift offered him, retaining less than half, and putting back the rest, with gentle force, into the sleeve of my yukata.

§ 11

From Urago we proceeded to Hishi-ura, which is in Nakano-shima, and the scenery grew always more wonderful as we steamed between the islands. The channel was just wide enough to create the illusion of a grand river flowing with the stillness of vast depth between mountains of a hundred forms. The long lovely vision was everywhere walled in by peaks, bluing through sea-haze, and on either hand the ruddy grey cliffs, sheering up from profundity, sharply mirrored their least asperities in the flood with never a distortion, as in a sheet of steel. Not until we reached Hishi-ura did the horizon reappear; and even then it was visible only between two lofty headlands, as if seen through a river's mouth.

Hishi-ura is far prettier than Urago, but it is much less populous, and has the aspect of a prosperous agricultural town, rather than of a fishing station. It bends round a bay formed by low hills which slope back gradually toward the mountainous interior, and which display a considerable extent of cultivated surface. The buildings are somewhat scattered and in many cases isolated by gardens; and those facing the water are quite handsome modern constructions. Urago boasts

the best hotel in all Oki; and it has two new temples, – one a Buddhist temple of the Zen sect, one a Shintō temple of the Izumo Taisha faith, each the gift of a single person. A rich widow, the owner of the hotel, built the Buddhist temple; and the wealthiest of the merchants contributed the other, – one of the handsomest miya for its size that I ever saw.

§ 12

Dōgo, the main island of the Oki archipelago, sometimes itself called 'Oki,' lies at a distance of eight miles, north-east of the Dōzen group, beyond a stretch of very dangerous sea. We made for it immediately after leaving Urago; passing to the open through a narrow and fantastic strait between Nakanoshima and Nishinoshima, where the cliffs take the form of enormous fortifications, – bastions and ramparts, rising by tiers. Three colossal rocks, anciently forming but a single mass, which would seem to have been divided by some tremendous shock, rise from deep water near the mouth of the channel, like shattered towers. And the last promontory of Nishinoshima, which we pass to port, a huge red naked rock, turns to the horizon a point so strangely shaped that it has been called by a name signifying 'The Hat of the Shintō Priest.'

As we glide out into the swell of the sea other extraordinary shapes appear, rising from great depths. Komori, 'The Bat,' a ragged silhouette against the horizon, has a great hole worn through it, which glares like an eye. Farther out two bulks, curved and pointed, and almost joined at the top, bear a grotesque resemblance to the uplifted pincers of a crab; and there is also visible a small dark mass which, until closely approached, seems the figure of a man sculling a boat. Beyond these are two islands: Matsushima, uninhabited and inaccessible, where there is always a swell to beware of; Omorishima,

even loftier, which rises from the ocean in enormous ruddy precipices. There seemed to be some grim force in those sinister bulks; some occult power which made our steamer reel and shiver as she passed them. But I saw a marvellous effect of colour under those formidable cliffs of Omorishima. They were lighted by a slanting sun; and where the glow of the bright rock fell upon the water, each black-blue ripple flashed bronze: I thought of a sea of metallic violet ink.

From Dōzen the cliffs of Dōgo can be clearly seen when the weather is not foul: they are streaked here and there with chalky white, which breaks through their blue, even in time of haze. Above them a vast bulk is visible, – a *point-de-repère* for the mariners of Hōki, – the mountain of Daimanji. Dōgo, indeed, is one great cluster of mountains.

Its cliffs rapidly turned green for us, and we followed them eastwardly for perhaps half an hour. Then they opened unexpectedly and widely, revealing a superb bay, widening far into the land, surrounded by hills, and full of shipping. Beyond a confusion of masts there crept into view a long grey line of house-fronts at the base of a crescent of cliffs, – the city of Saigo; and in a little while we touched a wharf of stone. There I bade farewell for a month to the *Oki-Saigo*.

§ 13

Saigo was a great surprise. Instead of the big fishing village I had expected to see, I found a city much larger and handsomer and in all respects more modernized than Sakai; a city of long streets full of good shops; a city with excellent public buildings; a city of which the whole appearance indicated commercial prosperity. Most of the edifices were roomy two-story dwellings of merchants, and everything had a bright, new look. The unpainted woodwork of the houses had not yet darkened into grey; the blue tints of the tiling were still fresh.

I learned that this was because the town had been recently rebuilt, after a conflagration, and rebuilt upon a larger and handsomer plan.

Saigo seems still larger than it really is. There are about one thousand houses, which number in any part of Western Japan means a population of at least five thousand, but must mean considerably more in Saigo. These form three long streets, – Nishimachi, Nakamachi, and Higashimachi (names respectively signifying the Western, Middle, and Eastern Streets), bisected by numerous cross-streets and alleys. What makes the place seem disproportionately large is the queer way the streets twist about, following the irregularities of the shore, and even doubling upon themselves, so as to create from certain points of view an impression of depth which has no existence. For Saigo is peculiarly, although admirably situated. It fringes both banks of a river, the Yabigawa, near its mouth, and likewise extends round a large point within the splendid bay, besides stretching itself out upon various tongues of land. But though smaller than it looks, to walk through all its serpentine streets is a good afternoon's work.

Besides being divided by the Yabigawa, the town is intersected by various water-ways, crossed by a number of bridges. On the hills behind it stand several large buildings, including a public school, with accommodation for three hundred students; a pretty Buddhist temple (quite new), the gift of a rich citizen; a prison; and a hospital, which deserves its reputation of being for its size the handsomest Japanese edifice not only in Oki, but in all Shimane-Ken; and there are several small but very pretty gardens.

As for the harbour, you can count more than three hundred ships riding there of a summer's day. Grumblers, especially of the kind who still use wooden anchors, complain of the depth; but the men-of-war do not.

§ 14

Never, in any part of Western Japan, have I been made more comfortable than at Saigo. My friend and myself were the only guests at the hotel to which we had been recommended. The broad and lofty rooms of the upper floor which we occupied overlooked the main street on one side, and on the other commanded a beautiful mountain landscape beyond the mouth of the Yabigawa, which flowed by our garden. The sea breeze never failed by day or by night, and rendered needless those pretty fans which it is the Japanese custom to present to guests during the hot season. The fare was astonishingly good, and curiously varied; and I was told that I might order Seyō-ryōri (Occidental cooking) if I wished, – beefsteak with fried potatoes, roast chicken, and so forth. I did not avail myself of the offer, as I make it a rule while travelling to escape trouble by keeping to a purely Japanese diet; but it was no small surprise to be offered in Saigo what is almost impossible to obtain in any other Japanese town of five thousand inhabitants. From a romantic point of view, however, this discovery was a disappointment. Having made my way into the most primitive region of all Japan, I had imagined myself far beyond the range of all modernizing influences; and the suggestion of beefsteak with fried potatoes was a disillusion. Nor was I entirely consoled by the subsequent discovery that there were no newspapers or telegraphs.

But there was one serious hindrance to the enjoyment of these comforts: an omnipresent, frightful, heavy, all-penetrating smell, the smell of decomposing fish, used as a fertilizer. Tons and tons of cuttlefish entrails are used upon the fields beyond the Yabigawa, and the never-sleeping sea wind blows the stench into every dwelling. Vainly do they keep incense burning in most of the houses during the heated term. After

having remained three or four days constantly in the city you become better able to endure this odour; but if you should leave town even for a few hours only, you will be astonished on returning to discover how much your nose had been numbed by habit and refreshed by absence.

§ 15

On the morning of the day after my arrival at Saigo, a young physician called to see me, and requested me to dine with him at his house. He explained very frankly that as I was the first foreigner who had ever stopped in Saigo, it would afford much pleasure both to his family and to himself to have a good chance to see me; but the natural courtesy of the man overcame any scruple I might have felt to gratify the curiosity of strangers. I was not only treated charmingly at his beautiful home, but actually sent away loaded with presents, most of which I attempted to decline in vain. In one matter, however, I remained obstinate, even at the risk of offending, – the gift of a wonderful specimen of bateiseki (a substance which I shall speak of hereafter). This I persisted in refusing to take, knowing it to be not only very costly, but very rare. My host at last yielded, but afterwards secretly sent to the hotel two smaller specimens, which Japanese etiquette rendered it impossible to return. Before leaving Saigo, I experienced many other unexpected kindnesses from the same gentleman.

Not long after, one of the teachers of the Saigo public school paid me a visit. He had heard of my interest in Oki, and brought with him two fine maps of the islands made by himself, a little book about Saigo, and, as a gift, a collection of Oki butterflies and insects which he had made. It is only in Japan that one is likely to meet with these wonderful exhibitions of pure goodness on the part of perfect strangers.

A third visitor, who had called to see my friend, performed

an action equally characteristic, but which caused me not a little pain. We squatted down to smoke together. He drew from his girdle a remarkably beautiful tobacco-pouch and pipe-case, containing a little silver pipe, which he began to smoke. The pipe-case was made of a sort of black coral, curiously carved, and attached to the tabako-iré, or pouch, by a heavy cord of plaited silk of three colours, passed through a ball of transparent agate. Seeing me admire it, he suddenly drew a knife from his sleeve, and before I could prevent him, severed the pipe-case from the pouch, and presented it to me. I felt almost as if he had cut one of his own nerves asunder when he cut that wonderful cord; and, nevertheless, once this had been done, to refuse the gift would have been rude in the extreme. I made him accept a present in return; but after that experience I was careful never again while in Oki to admire anything in the presence of its owner.

§ 16

Every province of Japan has its own peculiar dialect; and that of Oki, as might be expected in a country so isolated, is particularly distinct. In Saigo, however, the Izumo dialect is largely used. The townsfolk in their manners and customs much resemble Izumo country-folk; indeed, there are many Izumo people among them, most of the large businesses being in the hands of strangers. The women did not impress me as being so attractive as those of Izumo: I saw several very pretty girls, but these proved to be strangers.

However, it is only in the country that one can properly study the physical characteristics of a population. Those of the Oki islanders may best be noted at the fishing villages, many of which I visited. Everywhere I saw fine strong men and vigorous women; and it struck me that the extraordinary plenty and cheapness of nutritive food had quite as much to

do with this robustness as climate and constant exercise. So easy, indeed, is it to live in Oki, that men of other coasts, who find existence difficult, emigrate to Oki if they can get a chance to work there, even at less remuneration. An interesting spectacle to me were the vast processions of fishing-vessels which always, weather permitting, began to shoot out to sea a couple of hours before sundown. The surprising swiftness with which those light craft were impelled by their sinewy scullers – many of whom were women – told of a skill acquired only through the patient experience of generations. Another matter that amazed me was the number of boats. One night in the offing I was able to count three hundred and five torch-fires in sight, each one signifying a crew; and I knew that from almost any of the forty-five coast villages I might see the same spectacle at the same time. The main part of the population, in fact, spends its summer nights at sea. It is also a revelation to travel from Izumo to Hamada by night upon a swift steamer during the fishing season. The horizon for a hundred miles is alight with torch-fires; the toil of a whole coast is revealed in that vast illumination.

Although the human population appears to have gained rather than lost vigour upon this barren soil, the horses and cattle of the country seem to have degenerated. They are remarkably diminutive. I saw cows not much bigger than Izumo calves, with caves about the size of goats. The horses, or rather ponies, belong to a special breed of which Oki is rather proud, – very small, but hardy. I was told that there were larger horses, but I saw none, and could not learn whether they were imported. It seemed to me a curious thing, when I saw Oki ponies for the first time, that Sasaki Takatsuna's battle-steed – not less famous in Japanese story than the horse Kyrat in the ballads of Kurroglou – is declared by the islanders to have

been a native of Oki. And they have a tradition that it once swam from Oki to Mionoseki.

§ 17

Almost every district and town in Japan has its meibutsu or its kembutsu. The meibutsu of any place are its special productions, whether natural or artificial. The kembutsu of a town or district are its sights, – its places worth visiting for any reason, – religious, traditional, historical, or pleasurable. Temples and gardens, remarkable trees and curious rocks, are kembutsu. So, likewise, are any situations from which beautiful scenery may be looked at, or any localities where one can enjoy such charming spectacles as the blossoming of cherry-trees in spring, the flickering of fireflies in summer nights, the flushing of maple-leaves in autumn, or even that long snaky motion of moonlight upon water to which Chinese poets have given the delightful name of Kinryō, 'the Golden Dragon.'

The great meibutsu of Oki is the same as that of Hinomisaki, – dried cuttlefish; an article of food much in demand both in China and Japan. The cuttlefish of Oki and Hinomisaki and Mionoseki are all termed ika (a kind of sepia); but those caught at Mionoseki are white and average fifteen inches in length, while those of Oki and Hinomisaki rarely exceed twelve inches and have a reddish tinge. The fisheries of Mionoseki and Hinomisaki are scarcely known; but the fisheries of Oki are famed not only throughout Japan, but also in Korea and China. It is only through the tilling of the sea that the islands have become prosperous and capable of supporting thirty thousand souls upon a coast of which but a very small portion can be cultivated at all. Enormous quantities of cuttlefish are shipped to the mainland; but I have been told that the Chinese are the best customers of Oki for this product. Should the supply

ever fail, the result would be disastrous beyond conception; but at present it seems inexhaustible, though the fishing has been going on for thousands of years. Hundreds of tons of cuttlefish are caught, cured, and prepared for exportation month after month; and many hundreds of acres are fertilized with the entrails and other refuse. An officer of police told me several strange facts about this fishery. On the north-eastern coast of Saigo it is no uncommon thing for one fisherman to capture upwards of two thousand cuttlefish in a single night. Boats have been burst asunder by the weight of a few hauls, and caution has to be observed in loading. Besides the sepia, however, this coast swarms with another variety of cuttlefish which also furnishes a food-staple, – the formidable tako, or true octopus. Tako weighing fifteen kwan each, or nearly one hundred and twenty-five pounds, are sometimes caught near the fishing settlement of Nakamura. I was surprised to learn that there was no record of any person having been injured by these monstrous creatures.

Another meibutsu of Oki is much less known than it deserves to be, – the beautiful jet-black stone called bateiseki, or 'horse-hoof stone.'[1] It is found only in Dōgo, and never in large masses. It is about as heavy as flint, and chips like flint; but the polish which it takes is like that of agate. There are no veins or specks in it; the intense black colour never varies. Artistic objects are made of bateiseki: ink-stones, wine-cups, little boxes, small dai, or stands for vases or statuettes; even jewellery, the material being worked in the same manner as the beautiful agates of Yumachi in Izumo. These articles are comparatively costly, even in the place of their manufacture.

There is an odd legend about the origin of the bateiseki. It owes its name to some fancied resemblance to a horse's hoof, either in colour, or in the semicircular marks often seen upon

[1] It seems to be a black, obsidian.

the stone in its natural state, and caused by its tendency to split in curved lines. But the story goes that the bateiseki was formed by the touch of the hoofs of a sacred steed, the wonderful mare of the great Minamoto warrior, Sasaki Takatsuna. She had a foal, which fell into a deep lake in Dōgo, and was drowned. She plunged into the lake herself, but could not find her foal, being deceived by the reflection of her own head in the water. For a long time she sought and mourned in vain; but even the hard rocks felt for her, and where her hoofs touched them beneath the water they became changed into bateiseki.[1]

Scarcely less beautiful than bateiseki, and equally black, is another Oki meibutsu, a sort of coralline marine product called umi-matsu, or 'sea-pine.' Pipe-cases, brush-stands, and other small articles are manufactured from it; and these when polished seem to be covered with black lacquer. Objects of umi-matsu are rare and dear.

Nacre wares, however, are very cheap in Oki; and these form another variety of meibutsu. The shells of the awabi, or 'sea-ear,' which reaches a surprising size in these western waters, are converted by skilful polishing and cutting into wonderful dishes, bowls, cups, and other articles, over whose surfaces the play of iridescence is like a flickering of fire of a hundred colours.

§ 18

According to a little book published at Matsue, the kembutsu of Oki-no-Kuni are divided among three of the four principal islands; Chiburishima only possessing nothing of special interest. For many generations the attractions of Dōgo have been the shrine of Agonashi Jizō, at Tsubamezato; the

[1] There are several other versions of this legend. In one, it is the mare, and not the foal, which was drowned.

waterfall (Dangyo-taki) at Yuenimura; the mighty cedar-tree (*sugi*) before the shrine of Tama-Wakusa-jinja at Shimomura, and the lakelet called Sai-no-ike where the bateiseki is said to be found. Nakanoshima possesses the tomb of the exiled Emperor Go-Toba, at Amamura, and the residence of the ancient Chōja, Shikekurō, where he dwelt betimes, and where relics of him are kept even to this day. Nishinoshima possesses at Beppu a shrine in memory of the exiled Emperor Go-Daigo, and on the summit of Takuhizan that shrine of Gongen-Sama, from the place of which a wonderful view of the whole archipelago is said to be obtainable on cloudless days.

Though Chiburishima has no kembutsu, her poor little village of Chiburi – the same Chiburimura at which the Oki steamer always touches on her way to Saigo – is the scene of perhaps the most interesting of all the traditions of the archipelago.

Five hundred and sixty years ago, the exiled Emperor Go-Daigo managed to escape from the observation of his guards, and to flee from Nishinoshima to Chiburi. And the brown sailors of that little hamlet offered to serve him, even with their lives if need be. They were loading their boats with 'dried fish,' doubtless the same dried cuttlefish which their descendants still carry to Izumo and to Hōki. The emperor promised to remember them, should they succeed in landing him either in Hōki or in Izumo; and they put him in a boat.

But when they had sailed only a little way they saw the pursuing vessels. Then they told the emperor to lie down, and they piled the dried fish high above him. The pursuers came on board and searched the boat, but they did not even think of touching the strong-smelling cuttlefish. And when the men of Chiburi were questioned they invented a story, and gave to the enemies of the emperor a false clue to follow.

And so, by means of the cuttlefish, the good emperor was enabled to escape from banishment.

§ 19

I found there were various difficulties in the way of becoming acquainted with some of the kembutsu. There are no roads, properly speaking, in all Oki, only mountain paths; and consequently there are no jinricksha, with the exception of one especially imported by the leading physician of Saigo, and available for use only in the streets. There are not even any kago, or palanquins, except one for the use of the same physician. The paths are terribly rough, according to the testimony of the strong peasants themselves; and the distances, particularly in the hottest period of the year, are disheartening. Ponies can be hired; but my experiences of a similar wild country in western Izumo persuaded me that neither pleasure nor profit was to be gained by a long and painful ride over pine-covered hills, through slippery gullies and along torrent-beds, merely to look at a waterfall. I abandoned the idea of visiting Dangyotaki, but resolved, if possible, to see Agonashi-Jizō.

I had first heard in Matsue of Agonashi-Jizō, while suffering from one of those toothaches in which the pain appears to be several hundred miles in depth, – one of those toothaches which disturb your ideas of space and time. And a friend who sympathized said:

'People who have toothache pray to Agonashi-Jizō. Agonashi-Jizō is in Oki, but Izumo people pray to him. When cured they go to Lake Shinji, to the river, to the sea, or to any running stream, and drop into the water twelve pears (*nashi*), one for each of the twelve months. And they believe the currents will carry all these to Oki across the sea.

'Now, Agonashi-Jizō means 'Jizō-who-has-no-Jaw.' For it is said that in one of his former lives Jizō had such a toothache in his lower jaw that he tore off his jaw, and threw it away, and died. And he became a Bosatsu. And the people of Oki made a statue of him without a jaw; and all who suffer toothache pray to that Jizō of Oki.'

This story interested me; for more than once I had felt a strong desire to do like Agonashi-Jizō, though lacking the necessary courage and indifference to earthly consequences. Moreover, the tradition suggested so humane and profound a comprehension of toothache, and so large a sympathy with its victims, that I felt myself somewhat consoled.

Nevertheless, I did not go to see Agonashi-Jizō, because I found out there was no longer any Agonashi-Jizō to see. The news was brought one evening by some friends, shizoku of Matsue, who had settled in Oki, a young police officer and his wife. They had walked right across the island to see us, starting before daylight, and crossing no less than thirty-two torrents on their way. The wife, only nineteen, was quite slender and pretty, and did not appear tired by that long rough journey.

What we learned about the famous Jizō was this: The name Agonashi-Jizō was only a popular corruption of the true name, Agonaoshi-Jizō, or 'Jizō-the-Healer-of-Jaws.' The little temple in which the statue stood had been burned, and the statue along with it, except a fragment of the lower part of the figure, now piously preserved by some old peasant woman. It was impossible to rebuild the temple, as the disestablishment of Buddhism had entirely destroyed the resources of that faith in Oki. But the peasantry of Tsubamezato had built a little Shintō miya on the sight of the temple, with a torii before it, and people still prayed there to Agonaoshi-Jizō.

This last curious fact reminded me of the little torii I had seen erected before the images of Jizō in the Cave of the Children's Ghosts. Shintō, in these remote districts of the west, now appropriates the popular divinities of Buddhism, just as of old Buddhism used to absorb the divinities of Shintō in other parts of Japan.

§ 20

I went to the Sai-no-ike, and to Tama-Wakasu-jinja, as these two kembutsu can be reached by boat. The Sai-no-ike, however, much disappointed me. It can only be visited in very calm weather, as the way to it lies along a frightfully dangerous coast, nearly all sheer precipice. But the sea is beautifully clear, and the eye can distinguish forms at an immense depth below the surface. After following the cliffs for about an hour, the boat reaches a sort of cove, where the beach is entirely composed of small round boulders. They form a long ridge, the outer verge of which is always in motion, rolling to and fro with a crash like a volley of musketry at the rush and ebb of every wave. To climb over this ridge of moving stone balls is quite disagreeable; but after that one has only about twenty yards to walk. and the Sai-no-ike appears, surrounded on three sides by wooded hills. It is little more than a large freshwater pool, perhaps fifty yards wide, not in any way wonderful You can see no rocks under the surface, – only mud and pebbles. That any part of it was ever deep enough to drown a foal is hard to believe. I wanted to swim across to the farther side to try the depth, but the mere proposal scandalized the boatmen. The pool was sacred to the gods, and was guarded by invisible monsters; to enter it was impious and dangerous. I felt obliged to respect the local ideas on the subject, and contented myself with inquiring where the bateiseki was found. They pointed to the hill on the western side of the water. This

indication did not tally with the legend. I could discover no trace of any human labour on that savage hillside; there was certainly no habitation within miles of the place; it was the very abomination of desolation.[1]

It is never wise for the traveller in Japan to expect much on the strength of the reputation of kembutsu. The interest attaching to the vast majority of kembutsu depends altogether upon the exercise of imagination; and the ability to exercise such imagination again depends upon one's acquaintance with the history and mythology of the country. Knolls, rocks, stumps of trees, have been for hundreds of years objects of reverence for the peasantry, solely because of local traditions relating to them. Broken iron kettles, bronze mirrors covered with verdigris, rusty pieces of sword blades, fragments of red earthenware, have drawn generations of pilgrims to the shrines in which they are preserved. At various small temples which I visited, the temple treasures consisted of trays full of small stones. The first time I saw those little stones I thought that the priests had been studying geology or mineralogy, each stone being labelled in Japanese characters. On examination, the stones proved to be absolutely worthless in themselves, even as specimens of neighbouring rocks. But the stories which the priests or acolytes could tell about each and every stone were more than interesting. The stones served as rude beads, in fact, for the recital of a litany of Buddhist legends.

After the experience of the Sai-no-ike, I had little reason to expect to see anything extraordinary at Shimonishimura. But this time I was agreeably mistaken. Shimonishimura is

[1] There are two ponds not far from each other. The one I visited was called O-ike, or 'The Male Pond,' and the other, Me-ike, or 'The Female Pond.'

a pretty fishing village within an hour's row from Saigo. The boat follows a wild but beautiful coast, passing one singular truncated hill, Oshiroyama, upon which a strong castle stood in ancient times. There is now only a small Shintō shrine there, surrounded by pines. From the hamlet of Shimonishimura to the Temple of Tama-Wakasu-jinja is a walk of twenty minutes, over very rough paths between rice-fields and vegetable gardens. But the situation of the temple, surrounded by its sacred grove, in the heart of a landscape framed in by mountain ranges of many colours, is charmingly impressive. The edifice seems to have once been a Buddhist temple; it is now the largest Shintō structure in Oki. Before its gate stands the famous cedar, not remarkable for height, but wonderful for girth. Two yards above the soil its circumference is forty-five feet. It has given its name to the holy place; the Oki peasantry scarcely ever speak of Tama-Wakasu-jinja, but only of 'Ō-Sugi,' the Great Cedar.

Tradition avers that this tree was planted by a Buddhist nun more than eight hundred years ago. And it is alleged that whoever eats with chopsticks made from the wood of that tree will never have the toothache, and will live to become exceedingly old.[1]

§ 21

The shrine dedicated to the spirit of the Emperor Go-Daigo is in Nishinoshima, at Beppu, a picturesque fishing village composed of one long street of thatched cottages fringing a bay

[1] Speaking of the supposed power of certain trees to cure toothache, I may mention a curious superstition about the yanagi, or willow-tree. Sufferers from toothache sometimes stick needles into the tree, believing that the pain caused to the tree-spirit will force it to exercise its power to cure. I could not, however, find any record of this practice in Oki.

at the foot of a demilune of hills. The simplicity of manners and the honest healthy poverty of the place are quite wonderful even for Oki. There is a kind of inn for strangers at which hot water is served instead of tea, and dried beans instead of kwashi, and millet instead of rice. The absence of tea, however, is much more significant than that of rice. But the people of Beppu do not suffer for lack of proper nourishment, as their robust appearance bears witness: there are plenty of vegetables, all raised in tiny gardens which the women and children till during the absence of the boats; and there is abundance of fish. There is no Buddhist temple, but there is an ujigami.

The shrine of the emperor is at the top of a hill called Kurokizan, at one end of the bay. The hill is covered with tall pines, and the path is very steep, so that I thought it prudent to put on straw sandals, in which one never slips. I found the shrine to be a small wooden miya, scarcely three feet high, and black with age. There were remains of other miya, much older, lying in some bushes near by. Two large stones, unhewn and without inscriptions of any sort, have been placed before the shrine. I looked into it, and saw a crumbling metal-mirror, dingy paper gohei attached to splints of bamboo, two little o-mikidokkuri, or Shintō sake-vessels of red earthenware, and one rin. There was nothing else to see, except, indeed, certain delightful glimpses of coast and peak, visible in the bursts of warm blue light which penetrated the consecrated shadow, between the trunks of the great pines.

Only this humble shrine commemorates the good emperor's sojourn among the peasantry of Oki. But there is now being erected by voluntary subscription, at the little village of Go-sen-goku-mura, near Yonago in Tottori, quite a handsome monument of stone to the memory of his daughter, the princess Hinako-Nai-Shinnō, who died there while attempting to

follow her august parent into exile. Near the place of her rest stands a famous chestnut-tree, of which this story is told: While the emperor's daughter was ill, she asked for chestnuts; and some were given to her. But she took only one, and bit it a little, and threw it away. It found root and became a grand tree. But all the chestnuts of that tree bear marks like the marks of little teeth; for in Japanese legend even the trees are loyal, and strive to show their loyalty in all sorts of tender dumb ways. And that tree is called Hagata-guri-no-ki, which signifies: 'The Tree-of-the-Tooth-marked-Chestnuts.'

§ 22

Long before visiting Oki I had heard that such a crime as theft was unknown in the little archipelago; that it had never been found necessary there to lock things up; and that, whenever weather permitted, the people slept with their houses all open to the four winds of heaven.

And after careful investigation, I found these surprising statements were, to a great extent, true. In the Dōzen group, at least, there are no thieves, and practically no crime. Ten policemen are sufficient to control the whole of both Dōzen and Dōgo, with their population of thirty thousand one hundred and ninety-six souls. Each policeman has under his inspection a number of villages, which he visits on regular days; and his absence for any length of time from one of these seems never to be taken advantage of. His work is mostly confined to the enforcement of hygienic regulations, and to the writing of reports. It is very seldom that he finds it necessary to make an arrest, for the people scarcely ever quarrel.

In the island of Dōgo alone are there ever any petty thefts, and only in that part of Oki do the people take any precautions against thieves. Formerly there was no prison, and thefts were never heard of; and the people of Dōgo still claim that the few

persons arrested in their island for such offences are not natives of Oki, but strangers from the mainland. What appears to be quite true is that theft was unknown in Oki before the port of Saigo obtained its present importance. The whole trade of Western Japan has been increased by the rapid growth of steam communications with other parts of the empire; and the port of Saigo appears to have gained commercially, but to have lost morally, by the new conditions.

Yet offences against the law are still surprisingly few, even in Saigo. Saigo has a prison; and there were people in it during my stay in the city; but the inmates had been convicted only of such misdemeanours as gambling (which is strictly prohibited in every form by Japanese law), or the violation of lesser ordinances. When a serious offence is committed, the offender is not punished in Oki, but is sent to the great prison at Matsue, in Izumo.

The Dōzen islands, however, perfectly maintain their ancient reputation for irreproachable honesty. There have been no thieves in those three islands within the memory of man; and there are no serious quarrels, no fighting, nothing to make life miserable for anybody. Wild and bleak as the land is, all can manage to live comfortably enough; food is cheap and plenty, and manners and customs have retained their primitive simplicity.

§ 23

To foreign eyes the defences of even an Izumo dwelling against thieves seem ludicrous. *Chevaux-de-frise* of bamboo stakes are used extensively in eastern cities of the empire, but in Izumo these are not often to be seen, and do not protect the really weak points of the buildings upon which they are placed. As for outside walls and fences, they serve only for screens, or for ornamental boundaries; anyone can climb over

them. Anyone can also cut his way into an ordinary Japanese house with a pocket-knife. The amadō are thin sliding screens of soft wood, easy to break with a single blow; and in most Izumo homes there is not a lock which could resist one vigorous pull. Indeed, the Japanese themselves are so far aware of the futility of their wooden panels against burglars that all who can afford it build kura, – small heavy fire-proof and (for Japan) almost burglar-proof structures, with very thick earthen walls, a narrow ponderous door fastened with a gigantic padlock, and one very small iron-barred window, high up, near the roof. The kura are whitewashed, and look very neat. They cannot be used for dwellings, however, as they are mouldy and dark; and they serve only as storehouses for valuables. It is not easy to rob a kura.

But there is no trouble in 'burglariously' entering an Izumo dwelling unless there happen to be good watchdogs on the premises. The robber knows the only difficulties in the way of his enterprise are such as he is likely to encounter after having effected an entrance. In view of these difficulties, he usually carries a sword.

Nevertheless, he does not wish to find himself in any predicament requiring the use of a sword; and to avoid such an unpleasant possibility he has recourse to magic.

He looks about the premises for a tarai, – a kind of tub. If he finds one, he performs a nameless operation in a certain part of the yard, and covers the spot with the tub, turned upside down. He believes if he can do this that a magical sleep will fall upon all the inmates of the house, and that he will thus be able to carry away whatever he pleases, without being heard or seen.

But every Izumo household knows the counter-charm. Each evening, before retiring, the careful wife sees that a hōcho, or kitchen knife, is laid upon the kitchen floor, and

covered with a kanadarai, or brazen wash-basin, on the upturned bottom of which is placed a single straw sandal, of the noiseless sort called zōri, also turned upside down. She believes this little bit of witchcraft will not only nullify the robber's spell, but also render it impossible for him – even should he succeed in entering the house without being seen or heard – to carry anything whatever away. But, unless very tired indeed, she will also see that the tarai is brought into the house before the amadō are closed for the night.

If through omission of these (precautions as the good wife might aver), or in despite of them, the dwelling be robbed while the family are asleep, search is made early in the morning for the footprints of the burglar; and a moxa[1] is set burning upon each footprint. By this operation it is hoped or believed that the burglar's feet will be made so sore that he cannot run far, and that the police may easily overtake him.

§ 24

It was in Oki that I first heard of an extraordinary superstition about the cause of okori (ague, or intermittent fever), mild forms of which prevail in certain districts at certain seasons; but I have since learned that this quaint belief is an old one in Izumo and in many parts of the San-indō. It is a curious example of the manner in which Buddhism has been used to explain all mysteries.

Okori is said to be caused by the Gaki-botoke, or hungry

[1] *Moxa*, a corruption of the native name of the mugwort plant: *moe-kusa*, or *mogusa*, 'the burning weed.' Small cones of its fibre are used for cauterizing, according to the old Chinese system of medicine, – the little cones being placed upon the patient's skin, lighted, and left to smoulder until wholly consumed. The result is a profound scar. The moxa is not only used therapeutically, but also as a punishment for very naughty children. See the interesting note on this subject in Professor Chamberlain's *Things Japanese*.

ghosts. Strictly speaking, the Gaki-botoke are the Pretas of Indian Buddhism, spirits condemned to sojourn in the Gakidō, the sphere of the penance of perpetual hunger and thirst. But in Japanese Buddhism, the name Gaki is given also to those souls who have none among the living to remember them, and to prepare for them the customary offerings of food and tea.

These suffer, and seek to obtain warmth and nutriment by entering into the bodies of the living. The person into whom a gaki enters at first feels intensely cold and shivers, because the gaki is cold. But the chill is followed by a feeling of intense heat, as the gaki becomes warm. Having warmed itself and absorbed some nourishment at the expense of its unwilling host, the gaki goes away, and the fever ceases for a time. But at exactly the same hour upon another day the gaki will return, and the victim must shiver and burn until the haunter has become warm and has satisfied its hunger. Some gaki visit their patients every day; others every alternate day, or even less often. In brief: the paroxysms of any form of intermittent fever are explained by the presence of the gaki, and the intervals between the paroxysms by its absence.

§ 25

Of the word hotoke (which becomes botoke in such compounds as nure-botoke,[1] gaki-botoke) there is something curious to say.

Hotoke signifies a Buddha.

Hotoke signifies also the Souls of the Dead, – since faith holds that these, after worthy life, either enter upon the way to Buddhahood, or become Buddhas.

Hotoke, by euphemism, has likewise come to mean a corpse:

[1] *Nure botoke*, 'a wet god.' This term is applied to the statue of a deity left exposed to the open air.

hence the verb hotoke-zukuri, 'to look ghastly,' to have the semblance of one long dead.

And Hotoke-San is the name of the Image of a Face seen in the pupil of the eye, – Hotoke-San, 'the Lord Buddha.' Not the Supreme of the Hokkekyō, but that lesser Buddha who dwelleth in each one of us, – the Spirit.[1]

Sang Rossetti: '*I looked and saw your heart in the shadow of your eyes.*' Exactly converse is the Oriental thought. A Japanese lover would have said: 'I looked and saw *my own Buddha* in the shadow of your eyes.'

What is the psychical theory connected with so singular a belief?[2] I think it might be this: The Soul, within its own body, always remains viewless, yet may reflect itself in the eyes of another, as in the mirror of a necromancer. Vainly you gaze into the eyes of the beloved to discern her soul: you see there only your own soul's shadow, diaphanous; and beyond is mystery alone – reaching to the Infinite.

But is not this true? The Ego, as Schopenhauer wonderfully said, is the dark spot in consciousness, even as the point whereat the nerve of sight enters the eye is blind. We see ourselves in others only; only through others do we dimly guess that which we are. And in the deepest love of another being do we not indeed love ourselves? What are the personalities, the individualities of us but countless vibrations in the Universal Being? Are we not all One in the unknowable Ultimate? One with the inconceivable past? One with the everlasting future?

[1] According to popular legend, in each eye of the child of a god or a dragon *two Buddhas* are visible. The statement in some of the Japanese ballads, that the hero sung of had *four Buddhas* in his eyes, is equivalent to the declaration that each of his eyes had a double-pupil.

[2] The idea of the *Atman* will perhaps occur to many readers.

§ 26

In Oki, as in Izumo, the public school is slowly but surely destroying many of the old superstitions. Even the fishermen of the new generation laugh at things in which their fathers believed. I was rather surprised to receive from an intelligent young sailor, whom I had questioned through an interpreter about the ghostly fire of Takuhizan, this scornful answer: 'Oh, we used to believe those things when we were savages; but we are civilized now!'

Nevertheless, he was somewhat in advance of his time. In the village to which he belonged I discovered that the Fox-superstition prevails to a degree scarcely paralleled in any part of Izumo. The history of the village was quite curious. From time immemorial it had been reputed a settlement of kitsune-mochi: in other words, all its inhabitants were commonly believed, and perhaps believed themselves, to be the owners of goblin-foxes. And being all alike kitsune-mochi, they could eat and drink together, and marry and give in marriage among themselves without affliction. They were feared with a ghostly fear by the neighbouring peasantry, who obeyed their demands both in matters reasonable and unreasonable. They prospered exceedingly. But some twenty years ago an Izumo stranger settled among them. He was energetic, intelligent, and possessed of some capital. He bought land, made various shrewd investments, and in a surprisingly short time became the wealthiest citizen in the place. He built a very pretty Shintō temple and presented it to the community. There was only one obstacle in the way of his becoming a really popular person: he was not a kitsune-mochi, and he had even said that he hated foxes. This singularity threatened to beget discords in the mura, especially as he married his children to strangers, and thus began in the midst of the kitsune-mochi to establish a sort of anti-Fox-holding colony.

Wherefore, for a long time past, the Fox-holders have been trying to force their superfluous goblins upon him. Shadows glide about the gate of his dwelling on moonless nights, muttering: '*Kaere! kyō kara kokoye: kuruda!*' [Be off now! from now hereafter it is here that ye must dwell: go!] Then are the upper shōji violently pushed apart; and the voice of the enraged house owner is heard: '*Koko wa kiraida! modori!*' [Detestable is that which ye do! get ye gone!] And the Shadows flee away.[1]

§ 27

Because there were no cuttlefish at Hishi-ura, and no horrid smells, I enjoyed myself there more than I did anywhere else in Oki. But, in any event, Hishi-ura would have interested me more than Saigo. The life of the pretty little town is peculiarly old-fashioned; and the ancient domestic industries, which the introduction of machinery has almost destroyed in Izumo and elsewhere, still exist in Hishi-ura. It was pleasant to watch the rosy girls weaving robes of cotton and robes of silk, relieving each other whenever the work became fatiguing. All this quaint gentle life is open to inspection, and I loved to watch it. I had other pleasures also: the bay is a delightful place for swimming, and there were always boats ready to take me to any place of interest along the coast. At night the sea breeze made the rooms which I occupied deliciously cool; and from the balcony I could watch the bay-swell breaking in slow, cold fire on the steps of the wharves, –

[1] In 1892 a Japanese newspaper, published in Tōkyō, stated upon the authority of a physician who had visited Shimane, that the people of Oki believe in ghostly dogs instead of ghostly foxes. This is a mistake caused by the literal rendering of a term often used in Shimane, especially in Iwami, namely, inu-gami-mochi. It is only a euphemism for kitsune-mochi; the inu-gami is only the hito-kitsune, which is supposed to make itself visible in various animal forms.

a beautiful phosphorescence; and I could hear Oki mothers singing their babes to sleep with one of the oldest lullabys in the world:

Nenneko,
O-yama no
Usagi no ko,
Naze mata
O-mimi ga
Nagai e yara?
Okkasan no
O-naka ni
Oru toku ni,
Biwa no ha,
Sasa no ha,
Tabeta sona;
Sore de
O-mimi ga
Nagai e sona.[1]

The air was singularly sweet and plaintive, quite different from that to which the same words are sung in Izumo, and in other parts of Japan.

One morning I had hired a boat to take me to Beppu, and was on the point of leaving the hotel for the day, when the old landlady, touching my arm, exclaimed: 'Wait a little while; it is not good to cross a funeral.' I looked round the corner, and saw the procession coming along the shore. It was a Shintō funeral, – a child's funeral. Young lads came first, carrying Shintō emblems, – little white flags, and branches of the sacred

[1] Which words signify something like this:

'*Sleep, baby, sleep! Why are the honourable ears of the Child of the Hare of the honourable mountain so long?' Tis because when he dwelt within her honoured womb, his mamma ate the leaves of the loquat, the leaves of the bamboo-grass, That is why his honourable ears are so long.*'

sakaki; and after the coffin the mother walked, a young peasant, crying very loud, and wiping her eyes with the long sleeves of her coarse blue dress. Then the old woman at my side murmured: '*She sorrows; but she is very young: perhaps It will come back to her.*' For she was a pious Buddhist, my good old landlady, and doubtless supposed the mother's belief like her own, although the funeral was conducted according to the Shintō rite.

§ 28

There are in Buddhism certain weirdly beautiful consolations unknown to Western faith.

The young mother who loses her first child may at least pray that it will come back to her out of the night of death, – not in dreams only, but through reincarnation. And so praying, she writes within the hand of the little corpse the first ideograph of her lost darling's name.

Months pass; she again becomes a mother. Eagerly she examines the flower-soft hand of the infant. And lo! the self-same ideograph is there, – a rosy birth-mark on the tender palm; and the Soul returned looks out upon her through the eyes of the newly-born with the gaze of other days.

§ 29

While on the subject of death I may speak of a primitive but touching custom which exists both in Oki and Izumo, – that of calling the name of the dead immediately after death. For it is thought that the call may be heard by the fleeting soul, which might sometimes be thus induced to return. Therefore, when a mother dies, the children should first call her, and of all the children first the youngest (for she loved that one most); and then the husband and all those who loved the dead cry to her in turn.

And it is also the custom to call loudly the name of one who faints, or becomes insensible from any cause; and there are curious beliefs underlying this custom.

It is said that of those who swoon from pain or grief especially, many approach very nearly to death, and these always have the same experience. 'You feel,' said one to me in answer to my question about the belief, 'as if you were suddenly somewhere else, and quite happy, – only tired. And you know that you want to go to a Buddhist temple which is quite far away. At last you reach the gate of the temple court, and you see the temple inside, and it is wonderfully large and beautiful. And you pass the gate and enter the court to go to the temple. But suddenly you hear voices of friends far behind you calling your name – very, very earnestly. So you turn back, and all at once you come to yourself again. At least it is so if your heart cares to live. But one who is really tired of living will not listen to the voices, and walks on to the temple. And what there happens no man knows, for they who enter that temple never return to their friends.

'That is why people call loudly into the ear of one who swoons.

'Now, it is said that all who die, before going to the Meido, make one pilgrimage to the great temple of Zenkōji, which is in the country of Shinano, in Nagano-Ken. And they say that whenever the priest of that temple preaches, he sees the Souls gather there in the hondō to hear him, all with white wrappings about their heads. So Zenkōji might be the temple which is seen by those who swoon. But I do not know.'

§ 30

I went by boat from Hishi-ura to Amamura, in Nakano-shima, to visit the tomb of the exiled Emperor Go-Toba. The scenery along the way was beautiful, and of softer outline than

I had seen on my first passage through the archipelago. Small rocks rising from the water were covered with sea-gulls and cormorants, which scarcely took any notice of the boat, even when we came almost within an oar's length. This fearlessness of wild creatures is one of the most charming impressions of travel in these remoter parts of Japan, yet unvisited by tourists with shotguns. The early European and American hunters in Japan seem to have found no difficulty and felt no compunction in exterminating what they considered 'game' over whole districts, destroying life merely for the wanton pleasure of destruction. Their example is being imitated now by 'Young Japan,' and the destruction of bird life is only imperfectly checked by game laws. Happily, the Government *does* interfere sometimes to check particular forms of the hunting vice. Some brutes who had observed the habits of swallows to make their nests in Japanese houses, last year offered to purchase some thousands of swallow-skins at a tempting price. The effect of the advertisement was cruel enough; but the police were promptly notified to stop the murdering, which they did. About the same time, in one of the Yokohama papers, there appeared a letter from some holy person announcing, as a triumph of Christian sentiment, that a 'converted' fisherman had been persuaded by foreign proselytizers to kill a turtle, which his Buddhist comrades had vainly begged him to spare.

Amamura, a very small village, lies in a narrow plain of rice-fields extending from the sea to a range of low hills. From the landing-place to the village is about a quarter of a mile. The narrow path leading to it passes round the base of a small hill, covered with pines, on the outskirts of the village. There is quite a handsome Shintō temple on the hill, small, but admirably constructed, approached by stone steps and a paved walk.

There are the usual lions and lamps of stone, and the ordinary simple offerings of paper and women's hair before the shrine. But I saw among the ex-voto a number of curious things which I had never seen in Izumo, – tiny miniature buckets, well-buckets, with rope and pole complete, neatly fashioned out of bamboo. The boatman said that farmers bring these to the shrine when praying for rain. The deity was called Suwa-Dai-Myōjin.

It was at the neighbouring village, of which Suwa-Dai-Myōjin seems to be the ujigami, that the Emperor Go-Toba is said to have dwelt, in the house of the Chōja Shikekurō. The Shikekurō homestead remains, and still belongs to the Chōja's descendants, but they have become very poor. I asked permission to see the cups from which the exiled emperor drank, and other relics of his stay said to be preserved by the family; but in consequence of illness in the house I could not be received. So I had only a glimpse of the garden, where there is a celebrated pond, – a kembutsu.

The pond is called Shikekurō's Pond, – Shikekurō-no-ike. And for seven hundred years, 'tis said, the frogs of that pond have never been heard to croak.

For the Emperor Go-Toba, having one night been kept awake by the croaking of the frogs in that pond, arose and went out and commanded them, saying: 'Be silent!' Wherefore they have remained silent through all the centuries even unto this day.

Near the pond there was in that time a great pine-tree, of which the rustling upon windy nights disturbed the emperor's rest. And he spoke to the pine-tree, and said to it: 'Be still!' And never thereafter was that tree heard to rustle, even in time of storms.

But that tree has ceased to be. Nothing remains of it but a few fragments of its wood and bark, which are carefully pre-

served as relics by the ancients of Oki. Such a fragment was shown to me in the toko of the guest chamber of the dwelling of a physician of Saigo, – the same gentleman whose kindness I have related elsewhere.

The tomb of the emperor lies on the slope of a low hill, at a distance of about ten minutes' walk from the village. It is far less imposing than the least of the tombs of the Matsudaira at Matsue, in the grand old courts of Gesshōji; but it was perhaps the best which the poor little country of Oki could furnish. This is not, however, the original place of the tomb, which was moved by imperial order in the sixth year of Meiji to its present site. A lofty fence, or rather stockade of heavy wooden posts, painted black, incloses a piece of ground perhaps one hundred and fifty feet long, by about fifty broad, and graded into three levels, or low terraces. All the space within is shaded by pines. In the centre of the last and highest of the little terraces the tomb is placed: a single large slab of grey rock laid horizontally. A narrow paved walk leads from the gate to the tomb, ascending each terrace by three or four stone steps. A little within this gateway, which is opened to visitors only once a year, there is a torii facing the sepulchre; and before the highest terrace there are a pair of stone lamps. All this is severely simple, but effective in a certain touching way. The country stillness is broken only by the shrilling of the semi and the tintinnabulation of that strange little insect, the suzu-mushi, whose calling sounds just like the tinkling of the tiny bells which are shaken by the miko in her sacred dance.

§ 31

I remained nearly eight days at Hishi-ura on the occasion of my second visit there, but only three at Urago. Urago proved a less pleasant place to stay in, – not because its smells were any

stronger than those of Saigo, but for other reasons which shall presently appear.

More than one foreign man-of-war has touched at Saigo, and English and Russian officers of the navy have been seen in the streets. They were tall, fair-haired, stalwart men; and the people of Oki still imagine that all foreigners from the West have the same stature and complexion. I was the first foreigner who ever remained even a night in the town, and I stayed there two weeks; but being small and dark, and dressed like a Japanese, I excited little attention among the common people: it seemed to them that I was only a curious-looking Japanese from some remote part of the empire. At Hishi-ura the same impression prevailed for a time; and even after the fact of my being a foreigner had become generally known, the population caused me no annoyance whatever: they had already become accustomed to see me walking about the streets or swimming across the bay. But it was quite otherwise at Urago. The first time I landed there I had managed to escape notice, being in Japanese costume, and wearing a very large Izumo hat, which partly concealed my face. After I left for Saigo, the people must have found out that a foreigner – the very first ever seen in Dōzen – had actually been in Urago without their knowledge; for my second visit made a sensation such as I had never been the cause of anywhere else, except at Kaka-ura.

I had barely time to enter the hotel, before the street became entirely blockaded by an amazing crowd desirous to see. The hotel was unfortunately situated on a corner, so that it was soon besieged on two sides. I was shown to a large back room on the second floor; and I had no sooner squatted down on my mat, than the people began to come upstairs quite noiselessly, all leaving their sandals at the foot of the steps. They were too polite to enter the room; but four or five would put their heads through the doorway at once, and bow, and smile, and look, and

retire to make way for those who filled the stairway behind them. It was no easy matter for the servant to bring me my dinner. Meanwhile, not only had the upper rooms of the houses across the way become packed with gazers, but all the roofs – north, east, and south – which commanded a view of my apartment had been occupied by men and boys in multitude. Numbers of lads had also climbed (I never could imagine how) upon the narrow eaves over the galleries below my windows; and all the openings of my room, on three sides, were full of faces. Then tiles gave way, and boys fell, but nobody appeared to be hurt. And the queerest fact was that during the performance of these extraordinary gymnastics there was a silence of death: had I not seen the throng, I might have supposed there was not a soul in the street.

The landlord began to scold; but, finding scolding of no avail, he summoned a policeman. The policeman begged me to excuse the people, who had never seen a foreigner before; and asked me if I wished him to clear the street. He could have done that by merely lifting his little finger; but as the scene amused me, I begged him not to order the people away, but only to tell the boys not to climb upon the awnings, some of which they had already damaged. He told them most effectually, speaking in a very low voice. During all the rest of the time I was in Urago, no one dared to go near the awnings. A Japanese policeman never speaks more than once about anything new, and always speaks to the purpose.

The public curiosity, however, lasted without abate for three days, and would have lasted longer if I had not fled from Urago. Whenever I went out I drew the population after me with a pattering of geta like the sound of surf moving shingle. Yet, except for that particular sound, there was silence. No word was spoken. Whether this was because the whole mental faculty was so strained by the intensity of the

desire to see that speech became impossible, I am not able to decide. But there was no roughness in all that curiosity; there was never anything approaching rudeness, except in the matter of ascending to my room without leave; and that was done so gently that I could not wish the intruders rebuked. Nevertheless, three days of such experience proved trying. Despite the heat, I had to close the doors and windows at night to prevent myself being watched while asleep. About my effects I had no anxiety at all: thefts are never committed in the island. But that perpetual silent crowding about me became at last more than embarrassing. It was innocent, but it was weird. It made me feel like a ghost, – a new arrival in the Meido, surrounded by shapes without voice.

§ 32

There is very little privacy of any sort in Japanese life. Among the people, indeed, what we term privacy in the Occident does not exist. There are only walls of paper dividing the lives of men; there are only sliding screens instead of doors; there are neither locks nor bolts to be used by day; and whenever weather permits, the fronts, and perhaps even the sides of the house are literally removed, and its interior widely opened to the air, the light, and the public gaze. Not even the rich man closes his front gate by day. Within a hotel or even a common dwelling-house, nobody knocks before entering your room: there is nothing to knock at except a shōji or fusuma, which cannot be knocked upon without being broken. And in this world of paper walls and sunshine, nobody is afraid or ashamed of fellow-men or fellow-women. Whatever is done, is done, after a fashion, in public. Your personal habits, your idiosyncrasies (if you have any), your foibles, your likes and dislikes, your loves or your hates, must be known to everybody. Neither vices nor virtues can be hidden: there is absolutely

nowhere to hide them. And this condition has lasted from the most ancient time. There has never been, for the common millions at least, even the idea of living unobserved. Life can be comfortably and happily lived in Japan only upon the condition that all matters relating to it are open to the inspection of the community. Which implies exceptional moral conditions, such as have no being in the West. It is perfectly comprehensible only to those who know by experience the extraordinary charm of Japanese character, the infinite goodness of the common people, their instinctive politeness, and the absence among them of any tendencies to indulge in criticism, ridicule, irony, or sarcasm. No one endeavours to expand his own individuality by belittling his fellow; no one tries to make himself appear a superior being: any such attempt would be vain in a community where the weaknesses of each are known to all, where nothing can be concealed or disguised, and where affectation could only be regarded as a mild form of insanity.

§ 33

Some of the old samurai of Matsue are living in the Oki Islands. When the great military caste was disestablished, a few shrewd men decided to try their fortunes in the little archipelago, where customs remained old-fashioned and lands were cheap. Several succeeded, – probably because of the whole-souled honesty and simplicity of manners in the islands; for samurai have seldom elsewhere been able to succeed in business of any sort when obliged to compete with experienced traders. Others failed, but were able to adopt various humble occupations which gave them the means to live.

Besides these aged survivors of the feudal period, I learned there were in Oki several children of once noble families – youths and maidens of illustrious extraction – bravely facing the new conditions of life in this remotest and poorest region of

the empire. Daughters of men to whom the population of a town once bowed down were learning the bitter toil of the rice-fields. Youths, who might in another era have aspired to offices of State, had become the trusted servants of Oki heimin. Others, again, had entered the police,[1] and rightly deemed themselves fortunate.

No doubt that change of civilization forced upon Japan by Christian bayonets, for the holy motive of gain, may yet save the empire from perils greater than those of the late social disintegration; but it was cruelly sudden. To imagine the consequence of depriving the English landed gentry of their revenues would not enable one to realize exactly what a similar privation signified to the Japanese samurai. For the old warrior caste knew only the arts of courtesy and the arts of war.

And hearing of these things, I could not help thinking about a strange pageant at the last great Izumo festival of Rakuzan-jinja.

§ 34

The hamlet of Rakuzan, known only for its bright yellow pottery and its little Shintō temple, drowses at the foot of a wooded hill about one ri from Matsue, beyond a wilderness of rice-fields. And the deity of Rakuzan-jinja is Naomasa, grandson of Iyeyasu, and father of the Daimyō of Matsue.

Some of the Matsudaira slumber in Buddhist ground, guarded by tortoises and lions of stone, in the marvellous old courts of Gesshōji. But Naomasa, the founder of their long line, is enshrined at Rakuzan; and the Izumo peasants still

[1] The Japanese police are nearly all of the samurai class, now called shizoku. I think this force may be considered the most perfect police in the world; but whether it will retain those magnificent qualities which at present distinguish it, after the lapse of another generation, is doubtful. It is now the samurai blood that tells.

clap their hands in prayer before his miya, and implore his love and protection.

Now formerly upon each annual matsuri, or festival, of Rakuzan-jinja, it was customary to carry the miya of Naomasa-San from the village temple to the castle of Matsue. In solemn procession it was borne to those strange old family temples in the heart of the fortress-grounds, – Go-jō-nai-Inari-Daimyōjin, and Kusunoki-Matsuhira-Inari-Daimyōjin, – whose mouldering courts, peopled with lions and foxes of stone, are shadowed by enormous trees. After certain Shintō rites had been performed at both temples, the miya was carried back in procession to Rakuzan. And this annual ceremony was called the miyuki or togyo, – 'the August Going,' or Visit, of the ancestor to the ancestral home.

But the revolution changed all things. The daimyō passed away; the castles fell to ruin; the samurai caste was abolished and dispossessed. And the miya of Lord Naomasa made no August Visit to the home of the Matsudaira for more than thirty years.

But it came to pass a little time ago, that certain old men of Matsue bethought them to revive once more the ancient customs of the Rakuzan matsuri. And there was a miyuki.

The miya of Lord Naomasa was placed within a barge, draped and decorated, and so conveyed by river and canal to the eastern end of the old Matsubara road, along whose pine-shaded way the daimyō formerly departed to Yedo on their annual visit, or returned therefrom. All those who rowed the barge were aged samurai who had been wont in their youth to row the barge of Matsudaira-Dewa-no-Kami, the last Lord of Izumo. They wore their ancient feudal costume; and they tried to sing their ancient boat-song, – *o-funa-uta*. But more than a generation had passed since the last time they had sung it; and some of them had lost their teeth, so that they could not

pronounce the words well; and all, being aged, lost breath easily in the exertion of wielding the oars. Nevertheless they rowed the barge to the place appointed.

Thence the shrine was borne to a spot by the side of the Matsubara road, where anciently stood an August Tea-House, O-Chaya, at which the daimyō, returning from the Shogun's capital, were accustomed to rest and to receive their faithful retainers, who always came in procession to meet them. No tea-house stands there now; but, in accord with old custom, the shrine and its escort waited at the place among the wild flowers and the pines. And then was seen a strange sight.

For there came to meet the ghost of the great lord a long procession of shapes that seemed ghosts also, – shapes risen out of the dust of cemeteries: warriors in crested helmets and masks of iron and breastplates of steel, girded with two swords; and spearmen wearing queues; and retainers in kamishimo; and bearers of hasami-bako. Yet ghosts these were not, but aged samurai of Matsue, who had borne arms in the service of the last of the daimyō. And among them appeared his surviving ministers, the venerable karō; and these, as the procession turned city-ward, took their old places of honour, and marched before the shrine valiantly, though bent with years.

How that pageant might have impressed other strangers I do not know. For me, knowing something of the history of each of those aged men, the scene had a significance apart from its story of forgotten customs, apart from its interest as a feudal procession. To-day each and all of those old samurai are unspeakably poor. Their beautiful homes vanished long ago; their gardens have been turned into rice-fields; their household treasures were cruelly bargained for, and bought for almost nothing by curio-dealers to be resold at high prices to foreigners at the open ports. And yet what they could have obtained considerable money for, and what had ceased to be

of any service to them, they clung to fondly through all their poverty and humiliation. Never could they be induced to part with their armour and their swords, even when pressed by direst want, under the new and harder conditions of existence.

The river banks, the streets, the balconies, and blue-tiled roofs were thronged. There was a great quiet as the procession passed. Young people gazed in hushed wonder, feeling the rare worth of that chance to look upon what will belong in the future to picture-books only and to the quaint Japanese stage. And old men wept silently, remembering their youth.

Well spake the ancient thinker: '*Everything is only for a day, both that which remembers, and that which is remembered.*'

§ 35

Once more, homeward bound, I sat upon the cabin-roof of the *Oki-Saigo*, – this time happily unencumbered by water-melons, – and tried to explain to myself the feeling of melancholy with which I watched those wild island-coasts vanishing over the pale sea into the white horizon. No doubt it was inspired partly by the recollection of kindnesses received from many whom I shall never meet again; partly, also, by my familiarity with the ancient soil itself, and remembrance of shapes and places: the long blue visions down channels between islands, – the faint grey fishing hamlets hiding in stony bays, – the elfish oddity of narrow streets in little primitive towns, – the forms and tints of peak and vale made lovable by daily intimacy, – the crooked broken paths to shadowed shrines of gods with long mysterious names, – the butterfly-drifting of yellow sails out of the glow of an unknown horizon. Yet I think it was due much more to a particular sensation in which every memory was steeped and toned, as a landscape is steeped in the light and toned in the colours of the morning: the sensation of conditions closer to Nature's heart, and farther from

the monstrous machine-world of Western life than any into which I had ever entered north of the torrid zone. And then it seemed to me that I loved Oki – in spite of the cuttlefish, – chiefly because of having felt there, as nowhere else in Japan, the full joy of escape from the far-reaching influences of high-pressure civilization, – the delight of knowing one's self, in Dōzen at least, well beyond the range of everything artificial in human existence.

CHAPTER NINE

Of Souls

★

KINJURŌ, the ancient gardener, whose head shines like an ivory ball, sat him down a moment on the edge of the ita-noma outside my study to smoke his pipe at the hibachi always left there for him. And as he smoked he found occasion to reprove the boy who assists him. What the boy had been doing I did not exactly know; but I heard Kinjurō bid him try to comport himself like a creature having more than one Soul. And because those words interested me I went out and sat down by Kinjurō.

'O Kinjurō,' I said, 'whether I myself have one or more Souls I am not sure. But it would much please me to learn how many Souls have you.'

'I-the-Selfish-One have only four Souls,' made answer Kinjurō, with conviction imperturbable.

'Four?' re-echoed I, feeling doubtful of having understood.

'Four,' he repeated. 'But that boy I think can have only one Soul, so much is he wanting in patience.'

'And in what manner,' I asked, 'came you to learn that you have four Souls?'

'There are wise men,' made he answer, while knocking the ashes out of his little silver pipe, 'there are wise men who know these things. And there is an ancient book which discourses of them. According to the age of a man, and the time of his birth, and the stars of heaven, may the number of his Souls be divined. But this is the knowledge of old men: the young folk of these times who learn the things of the West do not believe.'

'And tell me, O Kinjurō, do there now exist people having more Souls than you?'

'Assuredly. Some have five, some six, some seven, some

eight Souls. But no one is by the gods permitted to have more Souls than nine.'

[Now this, as a universal statement, I could not believe, remembering a woman upon the other side of the world who possessed many generations of Souls, and knew how to use them all. She wore her Souls just as other women wear their dresses, and changed them several times a day; and the multitude of dresses in the wardrobe of Queen Elizabeth was as nothing to the multitude of this wonderful person's Souls. For which reason she never appeared the same upon two different occasions; and she changed her thought and her voice with her Souls. Sometimes she was of the South, and her eyes were brown; and again she was of the North, and her eyes were grey. Sometimes she was of the thirteenth, and sometimes of the eighteenth century; and people doubted their own senses when they saw these things; and they tried to find out the truth by begging photographs of her, and then comparing them. Now the photographers rejoiced to photograph her because she was more than fair; but presently they also were confounded by the discovery that she was never the same subject twice. So the men who most admired her could not presume to fall in love with her because that would have been absurd. She had altogether too many Souls. And some of you who read this I have written will bear witness to the verity thereof.]

'Concerning this Country of the Gods, O Kinjurō, that which you say may be true. But there are other countries having only gods made of gold; and in those countries matters are not so well arranged; and the inhabitants thereof are plagued with a plague of Souls. For while some have but half a Soul, or no Soul at all, others have Souls in multitude thrust upon them, for which neither nutriment nor employ can be

found. And Souls thus situated torment exceedingly their owners. . . . That is to say, Western Souls. . . . But tell me, I pray you, what is the use of having more than one or two Souls?'

'Master, if all had the same number and quality of Souls, all would surely be of one mind. But that people are different from each other is apparent; and the differences among them are because of the differences in the quality and the number of their Souls.'

'And it is better to have many Souls than a few?'

'It is better.'

'And the man having but one Soul is a being imperfect?'

'Very imperfect.'

'Yet a man very imperfect might have had an ancestor perfect?'

'That is true.'

'So that a man of to-day possessing but one Soul may have had an ancestor with nine Souls?'

'Yes.'

'Then what has become of those other eight Souls which the ancestor possessed, but which the descendant is without?'

'Ah! that is the work of the gods. The gods alone fix the number of Souls for each of us. To the worthy are many given; to the unworthy few.'

'Not from the parents, then, do the Souls descend?'

'Nay! Most ancient the Souls are: innumerable the years of them.'

'And this I desire to know: Can a man separate his Souls? Can he, for instance, have one Soul in Kyōto and one in Tōkyō and one in Matsue, all at the same time?'

'He cannot; they remain always together.'

'How? One within the other, – like the little lacquered boxes of an inrō?'

'Nay: that none but the gods know.'

'And the Souls are never separated?'

'Sometimes they may be separated. But if the Souls of a man be separated, that man becomes mad. Mad people are those who have lost one of their Souls.'

'But after death what becomes of the Souls?'

'They remain still together. . . . When a man dies his Souls ascend to the roof of the house. And they stay upon the roof for the space of nine and forty days.'

'On what part of the roof?'

'On the yane-no-mune, – upon the Ridge of the Roof they stay.'

'Can they be seen?'

'Nay: they are like the air is. To and fro upon the Ridge of the Roof they move, like a little wind.'

'Why do they not stay upon the roof for fifty days instead of forty-nine?'

'Seven weeks is the time allotted them before they must depart: seven weeks make the measure of forty-nine days. But why this should be, I cannot tell.'

I was not unaware of the ancient belief that the spirit of a dead man haunts for a time the roof of his dwelling, because it is referred to quite impressively in many Japanese dramas, among others in the play called *Kagami-yama*, which makes the people weep. But I had not before heard of triplex and quadruplex and other yet more highly complex Souls; and I questioned Kinjurō vainly in the hope of learning the authority for his beliefs. They were the beliefs of his fathers: that was all he knew.[1]

[1] Afterwards I found that the old man had expressed to me only one popular form of a belief which would require a large book to fully explain, – a belief founded upon Chinese astrology, but possibly modified by Buddhist and by Shintō ideas. This notion of compound

Like most Izumo folk, Kinjurō was a Buddhist as well as a Shintōist. As the former he belonged to the Zen-shū, as the

Souls cannot be explained at all without a prior knowledge of the astrological relation between the Chinese Zodiacal Signs and the Ten Celestial Stems. Some understanding of these may be obtained from the curious article 'Time,' in Professor Chamberlain's admirable little book, *Things Japanese*. The relation having been perceived, it is further necessary to know that under the Chinese astrological system each year is under the influence of one or other of the 'Five Elements,' – Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water; and according to the day and year of one's birth, one's temperament is celestially decided. A Japanese mnemonic verse tells us the number of souls or natures corresponding to each of the Five Elemental Influences, – namely, nine souls for Wood, three for Fire, one for Earth, seven for Metal, five for Water:

Kiku karani
Himitsu no yama ni
Tsuchi hitotsu
Nanatsu kane to zo
Go suiryō are.

Multiplied into ten by being each one divided into 'Elder' and 'Younger,' the Five Elements become the Ten Celestial Stems; and their influences are commingled with those of the Rat, Bull, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Serpent, Horse, Goat, Ape, Cock, Dog, and Boar (the twelve Zodiacal Signs), – all of which have relations to time, place, life, luck, misfortune, etc. But even these hints give no idea whatever how enormously complicated the subject really is.

The book the old gardener referred to – once as widely known in Japan as ever fortune-telling book in any European country – was the *San-ze-sō*, copies of which may still be picked up. Contrary to Kinjurō's opinion, however, it is held, by those learned in such Chinese matters, just as bad to have too many souls as to have too few. To have nine souls is to be too 'many-minded,' – without fixed purpose; to have only one soul is to lack quick intelligence. According to the Chinese astrological ideas, the word 'natures' or 'characters' would perhaps be more accurate than the word 'souls' in this case. There is a world of curious fancies, born out of these beliefs. For one example of hundreds, a person having a Fire-nature must not marry one having a Water-nature. Hence the proverbial saying about two who cannot agree, – 'They are like Fire and Water.'

latter to the Izumo-Taisha. Yet his ontology seemed to me not of either. Buddhism does not teach the doctrine of compound-multiple Souls. There are old Shintō books inaccessible to the multitude which speak of a doctrine very remotely akin to Kinjurō's; but Kinjurō had never seen them. Those books say that each of us has two souls, – the Ara-tama, or Rough Soul, which is vindictive; and the Nigi-tama, or Gentle Soul, which is all-forgiving. Furthermore, we are all possessed by the spirit of Oho-maga-tsu-hi-no-Kami, the 'Wondrous Deity of Exceeding Great Evils'; also by the spirit of Oho-naho-bi-no-Kami, the 'Wondrous Great Rectifying Deity,' a counteracting influence. These were not exactly the ideas of Kinjurō. But I remembered something Hirata wrote which reminded me of Kinjurō's words about a possible separation of souls. Hirata's teaching was that the ara-tama of a man may leave his body, assume his shape, and without his knowledge destroy a hated enemy. So I asked Kinjurō about it. He said he had never heard of a nigi-tama or an ara-tama; but he told me this:

'Master, when a man has been discovered by his wife to be secretly enamoured of another, it sometimes happens that the guilty woman is seized with a sickness that no physician can cure. For one of the Souls of the wife, moved exceedingly by anger, passes into the body of that woman to destroy her. But the wife also sickens, or loses her mind awhile, because of the absence of her Soul.

'And there is another and more wonderful thing known to us of Nippon, which you, being of the West, may never have heard. By the power of the gods, for a righteous purpose, sometimes a Soul may be withdrawn a little while from its body, and be made to utter its most secret thought. But no suffering to the body is then caused. And the wonder is wrought in this wise:

'A man loves a beautiful girl whom he is at liberty to marry; but he doubts whether he can hope to make her love him in return. He seeks the kannushi of a certain Shintō temple,[1] and tells of his doubt, and asks the aid of the gods to solve it. Then the priests demand, not his name, but his age and the year and day and hour of his birth, which they write down for the gods to know; and they bid the man return to the temple after the space of seven days.

'And during those seven days the priests offer prayer to the gods that the doubt may be solved; and one of them each morning bathes all his body in cold, pure water, and at each repast eats only food prepared with holy fire. And on the eighth day the man returns to the temple, and enters an inner chamber where the priests receive him.

'A ceremony is performed, and certain prayers are said, after which all wait in silence. And then, the priest who has performed the rites of purification suddenly begins to tremble violently in all his body, like one trembling with a great fever. And this is because, by the power of the gods, the Soul of the girl whose love is doubted has entered, all fearfully, into the body of that priest. She does not know; for at that time, wherever she may be, she is in a deep sleep from which nothing can arouse her. But her Soul, having been summoned into the body of the priest, can speak nothing save the truth; and It is made to tell all Its thought. And the priest speaks not with his own voice, but with the voice of the Soul; and he speaks in the person of the Soul, saying: "I love," or "I hate," according as the truth may be, and in the language of women. If there be hate, then the reason of the hate is spoken; but if the answer be of love, there is little to say. And then the trembling of the priest stops, for the Soul passes from him;

[1] Usually an Inari temple. Such things are never done at the great Shintō shrines.

and he falls forward upon his face like one dead, and long so remains.'

'Tell me, Kinjurō,' I asked, after all these queer things had been related to me, 'have you yourself ever known of a Soul being removed by the power of the gods, and placed in the heart of a priest?'

'Yes: I myself have known it.'

I remained silent and waited. The old man emptied his little pipe, threw it down beside the hibachi, folded his hands, and looked at the lotus-flowers for some time before he spoke again. Then he smiled and said:

'Master, I married when I was very young. For many years we had no children: then my wife at last gave me a son, and became a Buddha. But my son lived and grew up handsome and strong; and when the Revolution came, he joined the armies of the Son of Heaven; and he died the death of a man in the great war of the South, in Kyūshū. I loved him; and I wept with joy when I heard that he had been able to die for our Sacred Emperor: since there is no more noble death for the son of a samurai. So they buried my boy far away from me in Kyūshū, upon a hill near Kumamoto, which is a famous city with a strong garrison; and I went there to make his tomb beautiful. But his name is here also, in Ninomaru, graven on the monument to the men of Izumo who fell in the good fight for loyalty and honour in our emperor's holy cause; and when I see his name there, my heart laughs, and I speak to him, and then it seems as if he were walking beside me again, under the great pines. . . . But all that is another matter.

'I sorrowed for my wife. All the years we had dwelt together no unkind word had ever been uttered between us. And when she died, I thought never to marry again. But after two more years had passed, my father and mother desired a daughter in the house, and they told me of their wish, and of a girl who was

beautiful and of good family, though poor. The family were of our kindred, and the girl was their only support: she wove garments of silk and garments of cotton, and for this she received but little money. And because she was filial and comely, and our kindred not fortunate, my parents desired that I should marry her and help her people; for in those days we had a small income of rice. Then, being accustomed to obey my parents, I suffered them to do what they thought best. So the nakōdo was summoned, and the arrangements for the wedding began.

'Twice I was able to see the girl in the house of her parents. And I thought myself fortunate the first time I looked upon her; for she was very comely and young. But the second time, I perceived she had been weeping, and that her eyes avoided mine. Then my heart sank; for I thought: She dislikes me; and they are forcing her to this thing. Then I resolved to question the gods; and I caused the marriage to be delayed; and I went to the temple of Yanagi-no-Inari-Sama, which is in the Street Zaimokuchō.

'And when the trembling came upon him, the priest, speaking with the Soul of that maid, declared to me: "My heart hates you, and the sight of your face gives me sickness, because I love another, and because this marriage is forced upon me. Yet though my heart hates you, I must marry you because my parents are poor and old, and I alone cannot long continue to support them, for my work is killing me. But though I may strive to be a dutiful wife, there never will be gladness in your house because of me; for my heart hates you with a great and lasting hate; and the sound of your voice makes a sickness in my breast (*koe kiite mo mune ga waruku naru*); and only to see your face makes me wish that I were dead (*kao miru to shinitaku naru*)."

'Thus knowing the truth, I told it to my parents; and I

wrote a letter of kind words to the maid, praying pardon for the pain I had unknowingly caused her; and I feigned long illness, that the marriage might be broken off without gossip; and we made a gift to that family; and the maid was glad. For she was enabled at a later time to marry the young man she loved. My parents never pressed me again to take a wife; and since their death I have lived alone. . . . O Master, look upon the extreme wickedness of that boy!'

Taking advantage of our conversation, Kinjurō's young assistant had improvised a rod and line with a bamboo stick and a bit of string; and had fastened to the end of the string a pellet of tobacco stolen from the old man's pouch. With this bait he had been fishing in the lotus pond; and a frog had swallowed it, and was now suspended high above the pebbles, sprawling in rotary motion, kicking in frantic spasms of disgust and despair. 'Kaji!' shouted the gardener.

The boy dropped his rod with a laugh, and ran to us unabashed; while the frog, having disgorged the tobacco, plopped back into the lotus pond. Evidently Kaji was not afraid of scoldings.

'*Goshō ga warui!*' declared the old man, shaking his ivory head. 'O Kaji, much I fear that your next birth will be bad! Do I buy tobacco for frogs? Master, said I not rightly this boy has but one Soul?'

CHAPTER TEN

Of Ghosts and Goblins

★

§ 1

THERE was a Buddha, according to the Hokkekyō who 'even assumed the shape of a goblin to preach to such as were to be converted by a goblin.' And in the same Sutra may be found this promise of the Teacher: '*While he is dwelling lonely in the wilderness, I will send thither goblins in great number to keep him company.*' The appalling character of this promise is indeed somewhat modified by the assurance that gods also are to be sent. But if ever I become a holy man, I shall take heed not to dwell in the wilderness, because I have seen Japanese goblins, and I do not like them.

Kinjurō showed them to me last night. They had come to town for the matsuri of our own ujigami, or parish-temple; and, as there were many curious things to be seen at the night festival, we started for the temple after dark, Kinjurō carrying a paper lantern painted with my crest.

It had snowed heavily in the morning; but now the sky and the sharp still air were clear as diamond; and the crisp snow made a pleasant crunching sound under our feet as we walked; and it occurred to me to say: 'O Kinjurō, is there a God of Snow?'

'I cannot tell,' replied Kinjurō. 'There be many gods I do not know; and there is not any man who knows the names of all the gods. But there is the Yuki-Onna, the Woman of the Snow.'

'And what is the Yuki-Onna?'

'She is the White One that makes the Faces in the snow. She does not any harm, only makes afraid. By day she lifts only her head, and frightens those who journey alone. But at night she rises up sometimes, taller than the trees, and looks

about a little while, and then falls back in a shower of snow.'[1]

'What is her face like?'

'It is all white, white. It is an enormous face. And it is a *lonesome* face.'

[The word Kinjurō used was *samushii*. Its common meaning is 'lonesome'; but he used it, I think, in the sense of 'weird.']

'Did you ever see her, Kinjurō?'

'Master, I never saw her. But my father told me that once when he was a child, he wanted to go to a neighbour's house through the snow to play with another little boy; and that on the way he saw a great white Face rise up from the snow and look lonesomely about, so that he cried for fear and ran back. Then his people all went out and looked; but there was only snow; and then they knew that he had seen the Yuki-Onna.'

'And in these days, Kinjurō, do people ever see her?'

'Yes. Those who make the pilgrimage to Yabumura, in the period called Dai-Kan, which is the Time of the Greatest Cold,[2] they sometimes see her.'

'What is there at Yabumura, Kinjurō?'

'There is the Yabu-jinja, which is an ancient and famous temple of Yabu-no-Tenno-San, – the God of Colds, Kaze-no-Kami. It is high upon a hill, nearly nine ri from Matsue. And the great matsuri of that temple is held upon the tenth and eleventh days of the Second Month. And on those days strange things may be seen. For one who gets a very bad cold prays to the deity of Yabu-jinja to cure it, and takes a vow to make a pilgrimage naked to the temple at the time of the matsuri.'

[1] In other parts of Japan I have heard the Yuki-Onna described as a very beautiful phantom who lures young men to lonesome places for the purpose of sucking their blood.

[2] In Izumo the Dai-Kan, or Period of Greatest Cold, falls in February.

'Naked?'

'Yes: the pilgrims wear only waraji, and a little cloth round their loins. And a great many men and women go naked through the snow to the temple, though the snow is deep at that time. And each man carries a bunch of gohei and a naked sword as gifts to the temple; and each woman carries a metal mirror. And at the temple, the priests receive them, performing curious rites. For the priests then, according to ancient custom, attire themselves like sick men, and lie down and groan, and drink potions made of herbs, prepared after the Chinese manner.'

'But do not some of the pilgrims die of cold, Kinjurō?'

'No: our Izumo peasants are hardy. Besides, they run swiftly, so that they reach the temple all warm. And before returning they put on thick warm robes. But sometimes, upon the way, they see the Yuki-Onna.'

§ 2

Each side of the street leading to the miya was illuminated with a line of paper lanterns bearing holy symbols; and the immense court of the temple had been transformed into a town of booths, and shops, and temporary theatres. In spite of the cold, the crowd was prodigious. There seemed to be all the usual attractions of a matsuri, and a number of unusual ones. Among the familiar lures, I missed at this festival only the maiden wearing an obi of living snakes; probably it had become too cold for the snakes. There were several fortune-tellers and jugglers; there were acrobats and dancers; there was a man making pictures out of sand; and there was a menagerie containing an emu from Australia, and a couple of enormous bats from the Loo Choo Islands, – bats trained to do several things. I did reverence to the gods, and bought some extraordinary toys; and then we went to look for the

goblins. They were domiciled in a large permanent structure, rented to showmen on special occasions.

Gigantic characters signifying 'IKI-NINGYŌ,' painted upon the signboard at the entrance, partly hinted the nature of the exhibition. Iki-ningyō ('living images') somewhat correspond to our Occidental 'wax figures'; but the equally realistic Japanese creations are made of much cheaper material. Having bought two wooden tickets for one sen each, we entered, and passed behind a curtain to find ourselves in a long corridor lined with booths, or rather matted compartments, about the size of small rooms. Each space, decorated with scenery appropriate to the subject, was occupied by a group of life-size figures. The group nearest the entrance, representing two men playing samisen and two geisha dancing, seemed to me without excuse for being, until Kinjurō had translated a little placard before it, announcing that one of the figures was a living person. We watched in vain for a wink or palpitation. Suddenly one of the musicians laughed aloud, shook his head, and began to play and sing. The deception was perfect.

The remaining groups, twenty-four in number, were powerfully impressive in their peculiar way, representing mostly famous popular traditions or sacred myths. Feudal heroisms, the memory of which stirs every Japanese heart; legends of filial piety; Buddhist miracles, and stories of emperors were among the subjects. Sometimes, however, the realism was brutal, as in one scene representing the body of a woman lying in a pool of blood, with brains scattered by a sword stroke. Nor was this unpleasantness altogether atoned for by her miraculous resuscitation in the adjoining compartment, where she reappeared returning thanks in a Nichiren temple, and converting her slaughterer, who happened, by some extraordinary accident, to go there at the same time.

At the termination of the corridor there hung a black cur-

tain, behind which screams could be heard. And above the black curtain was a placard inscribed with the promise of a gift to anybody able to traverse the mysteries beyond without being frightened.

'Master,' said Kinjurō, 'the goblins are inside.'

We lifted the veil, and found ourselves in a sort of lane between hedges, and behind the hedges we saw tombs; we were in a graveyard. There were real weeds and trees, and sotoba and haka, and the effect was quite natural. Moreover, as the roof was very lofty, and kept invisible by a clever arrangement of lights, all seemed darkness only; and this gave one a sense of being out under the night, a feeling accentuated by the chill of the air. And here and there we could discern sinister shapes, mostly of superhuman stature, some seeming to wait in dim places, others floating above the graves. Quite near us, towering above the hedge on our right, was a Buddhist priest, with his back turned to us.

'A yamabushi, an exorciser?' I queried of Kinjurō.

'No,' said Kinjurō; 'see how tall he is. I think that must be a Tanuki-Bōzu.'

The Tanuki-Bōzu is the priestly form assumed by the goblin-badger (*tanuki*) for the purpose of decoying belated travellers to destruction. We went on, and looked up into his face. It was a nightmare, – his face.

'In truth a Tanuki-Bōzu,' said Kinjurō. 'What does the Master honourably think concerning it?'

Instead of replying, I jumped back; for the monstrous thing had suddenly reached over the hedge and clutched at me, with a moan. Then it fell back, swaying and creaking. It was moved by invisible strings.

'I think, Kinjurō, that it is a nasty, horrid thing. . . . But I shall not claim the present.'

We laughed, and proceeded to consider a Three-Eyed Friar

(*Mitsu-me-Nyūdō*). The Three-Eyed Friar also watches for the unwary at night. His face is soft and smiling as the face of a Buddha, but he has a hideous eye in the summit of his shaven pate, which can only be seen when seeing it does no good. The Mitsu-me-Nyūdō made a grab at Kinjurō, and startled him almost as much as the Tanuki-Bōzu had startled me.

Then we looked at the Yama-Uba, – the 'Mountain Nurse.' She catches little children and nurses them for a while, and then devours them. In her face she has no mouth; but she has a mouth in the top of her head, under her hair. The Yama-Uba did not clutch at us, because her hands were occupied with a nice little boy, whom she was just going to eat. The child had been made wonderfully pretty to heighten the effect.

Then I saw the spectre of a woman hovering in the air above a tomb at some distance, so that I felt safer in observing it. It had no eyes; its long hair hung loose; its white robe floated light as smoke. I thought of a statement in a composition by one of my pupils about ghosts: '*Their greatest Peculiarity is that They have no feet.*' Then I jumped again, for the thing, quite soundlessly but very swiftly, made through the air at me.

And the rest of our journey among the graves was little more than a succession of like experiences; but it was made amusing by the screams of women, and bursts of laughter from people who lingered only to watch the effect upon others of what had scared themselves.

§ 3

Forsaking the goblins, we visited a little open-air theatre to see two girls dance. After they had danced awhile, one girl produced a sword and cut off the other girl's head, and put

it upon a table, where it opened its mouth and began to sing. All this was very prettily done; but my mind was still haunted by the goblins. So I questioned Kinjurō:

'Kinjurō, those goblins of which we the ningyō have seen, – do folk believe in the reality thereof?'

'Not any more,' answered Kinjurō, – 'not at least among the people of the city. Perhaps in the country it may not be so. We believe in the Lord Buddha; we believe in the ancient gods; and there be many who believe the dead sometimes return to avenge a cruelty or to compel an act of justice. But we do not now believe all that was believed in ancient time. . . . Master,' he added, as we reached another queer exhibition, 'it is only one sen to go to hell, if the Master would like to go–'

'Very good, Kinjurō,' I made reply. 'Pay two sen that we may both go to hell.'

§ 4

And we passed behind a curtain into a big room full of curious clicking and squeaking noises. These noises were made by unseen wheels and pulleys moving a multitude of ningyō upon a broad shelf about breast-high, which surrounded the apartment upon three sides. These ningyō were not iki-ningyō, but very small images, – puppets. They represented all things in the Under-World.

The first I saw was Sozu-Baba, the Old Woman of the River of Ghosts, who takes away the garments of Souls. The garments were hanging upon a tree behind her. She was tall; she rolled her green eyes and gnashed her long teeth, while the shivering of the little white souls before her was as a trembling of butterflies. Farther on appeared Emma Dai-O, great King of Hell, nodding grimly. At his right hand, upon their tripod, the heads of Kaguhana and Mirume, the Witnesses, whirled as upon a wheel. At his left, a devil was busy sawing

a Soul in two; and I noticed that he used his saw like a Japanese carpenter, – pulling it towards him instead of pushing it. And then various exhibitions of the tortures of the damned. A liar bound to a post was having his tongue pulled out by a devil, – slowly, with artistic jerks; it was already longer than the owner's body. Another devil was pounding another Soul in a mortar so vigorously that the sound of the braying could be heard above all the din of the machinery. A little farther on was a man being eaten alive by two serpents having women's faces; one serpent was white, the other blue. The white had been his wife, the blue his concubine. All the tortures known to mediæval Japan were being elsewhere deftly practised by swarms of devils. After reviewing them, we visited the Sai-no-Kawara, and saw Jizō with a child in his arms, and a circle of other children running swiftly around him, to escape from demons who brandished their clubs and ground their teeth.

Hell proved, however, to be extremely cold; and while meditating on the partial inappropriateness of the atmosphere, it occurred to me that in the common Buddhist picture-books of the Jigoku I had never noticed any illustrations of torment by cold. Indian Buddhism, indeed, teaches the existence of cold hells. There is one, for instance, where people's lips are frozen so that they can say only 'Ah-ta-ta!' – wherefore that hell is called Atata. And there is the hell where tongues are frozen, and where people say only 'Ah-baba!' for which reason it is called Ababa. And there is the Pundarika, or Great White-Lotus hell, where the spectacle of the bones laid bare by the cold is 'like a blossoming of white lotus-flowers.' Kinjurō thinks there are cold hells according to Japanese Buddhism; but he is not sure. And I am not sure that the idea of cold could be made very terrible to the Japanese. They confess a general liking for cold, and compose Chinese poems about the loveliness of ice and snow.

§ 5

Out of hell, we found our way to a magic-lantern show being given in a larger and even much colder structure. A Japanese magic-lantern show is nearly always interesting in more particulars than one, but perhaps especially as evidencing the native genius for adapting Western inventions to Eastern tastes. A Japanese magic-lantern show is essentially dramatic. It is a play of which the dialogue is uttered by invisible personages, the actors and the scenery being only luminous shadows. Wherefore it is peculiarly well suited to goblinries and weirdnesses of all kinds; and plays in which ghosts figure are the favourite subjects. As the hall was bitterly cold, I waited only long enough to see one performance, – of which the following is an epitome:

SCENE I. – A beautiful peasant girl and her aged mother, squatting together at home. Mother weeps violently, gesticulates agonizingly. From her frantic speech, broken by wild sobs, we learn that the girl must be sent as a victim to the Kami-Sama of some lonesome temple in the mountains. That god is a bad god. Once a year he shoots an arrow into the thatch of some farmer's house as a sign that he wants a girl – to eat! Unless the girl be sent to him at once, he destroys the crops and the cows. Exit mother, weeping and shrieking, and pulling out her grey hair. Exit girl, with downcast head, and air of sweet resignation.

SCENE II. – Before a wayside inn; cherry-trees in blossom. Enter coolies carrying, like a palanquin, a large box, in which the girl is supposed to be. Deposit box; enter to eat; tell story to loquacious landlord. Enter noble samurai, with two swords. Asks about box. Hears the story of the coolies repeated by loquacious landlord. Exhibits fierce indignation; vows that the

Kami-Sama are good, – do not eat girls. Declares that so-called Kami-Sama to be a devil. Observes that devils must be killed. Orders box opened. Sends girl home. Gets into box himself, and commands coolies under pain of death to bear him right quickly to that temple.

SCENE III. – Enter coolies, approaching temple through forest at night. Coolies afraid. Drop box and run. Exeunt coolies. Box alone in the dark. Enter veiled figure, all white. Figure moans unpleasantly; utters horrid cries. Box remains impassive. Figure removes veil, showing Its face, – a skull with phosphoric eyes. [*Audience unanimously utter the sound 'Aaaaaaa!'*] Figure displays Its hands, – monstrous and apish, with claws. [*Audience utter a second 'Aaaaaa!'*] Figure approaches the box, touches the box, opens the box! Up leaps noble samurai. A wrestle; drums sound the roll of battle. Noble samurai practises successfully noble art of ju-jutsu. Casts demon down, tramples upon him triumphantly, cuts off his head. Head suddenly enlarges, grows to the size of a house, tries to bite off head of samurai. Samurai slashes it with his sword. Head rolls backward, spitting fire, and vanishes. Finis. *Exeunt omnes.*

§ 6

The vision of the samurai and the goblin reminded Kinjurō of a queer tale, which he began to tell me as soon as the shadow-play was over. Ghastly stories are apt to fall flat after such an exhibition; but Kinjurō's stories are always peculiar enough to justify the telling under almost any circumstances. Wherefore I listened eagerly, in spite of the cold:

'A long time ago, in the days when Fox-women and goblins haunted this land, there came to the capital with her parents

a samurai girl, so beautiful that all men who saw her fell enamoured of her. And hundreds of young samurai desired and hoped to marry her, and made their desire known to her parents. For it has ever been the custom in Japan that marriages should be arranged by parents. But there are exceptions to all customs, and the case of this maiden was such an exception. Her parents declared that they intended to allow their daughter to choose her own husband, and that all who wished to win her would be free to woo her.

'Many men of high rank and of great wealth were admitted to the house as suitors; and each one courted her as he best knew how, – with gifts, and with fair words, and with poems written in her honour, and with promises of eternal love. And to each one she spoke sweetly and hopefully; but she made strange conditions. For every suitor she obliged to bind himself by his word of honour as a samurai to submit to a test of his love for her, and never to divulge to living person what that test might be. And to this all agreed.

'But even the most confident suitors suddenly ceased their importunities after having been put to the test; and all of them appeared to have been greatly terrified by something. Indeed, not a few even fled away from the city, and could not be persuaded by their friends to return. But no one ever so much as hinted why. Therefore it was whispered by those who knew nothing of the mystery, that the beautiful girl must be either a Fox-woman or a goblin.

'Now, when all the wooers of high rank had abandoned their suit, there came a samurai who had no wealth but his sword. He was a good man and true, and of pleasing presence; and the girl seemed to like him. But she made him take the same pledge which the others had taken; and after he had taken it, she told him to return upon a certain evening.

'When that evening came, he was received at the house by

none but the girl herself. With her own hands she set before him the repast of hospitality, and waited upon him, after which she told him that she wished him to go out with her at a late hour. To this he consented gladly, and inquired to what place she desired to go. But she replied nothing to his question, and all at once became very silent, and strange in her manner. And after a while she retired from the apartment, leaving him alone.

'Only long after midnight she returned, robed all in white, – like a Soul, – and, without uttering a word, signed to him to follow her. Out of the house they hastened while all the city slept. It was what is called an oborozuki-yo – 'moon-clouded night.' Always upon such a night, 'tis said, do ghosts wander. She swiftly led the way; and the dogs howled as she flitted by; and she passed beyond the confines of the city to a place of knolls shadowed by enormous trees, where an ancient cemetery was. Into it she glided, – a white shadow into blackness. He followed, wondering, his hand upon his sword. Then his eyes became accustomed to the gloom; and he saw.

'By a new-made grave she paused and signed to him to wait. The tools of the grave-maker were still lying there. Seizing one, she began to dig furiously, with strange haste and strength. At last her spade smote a coffin-lid and made it boom: another moment and the fresh white wood of the kwan was bare. She tore off the lid, revealing a corpse within, – the corpse of a child. With goblin gestures she wrung an arm from the body, wrenched it in twain, and, squatting down, began to devour the upper half. Then, flinging to her lover the other half, she cried to him, "*Eat, if thou lovest me! this is what I eat!*"

'Not even for a single instant did he hesitate. He squatted down upon the other side of the grave, and ate the half of the

arm, and said, "*Kekkō degozarimasu! mo sukoshi chōdai.*"[1] For that arm was made of the best kwashi[2] that Saikyō could produce.

'Then the girl sprang to her feet with a burst of laughter, and cried: "You only, of all my brave suitors, did not run away! And I wanted a husband who could not fear. I will marry you; I can love you: you are a *man!*" '

§ 7

'O Kinjurō,' I said, as we took our way home, 'I have heard and I have read many Japanese stories of the returning of the dead. Likewise you yourself have told me it is still believed the dead return, and why. But according both to that which I have read and that which you have told me, the coming back of the dead is never a thing to be desired. They return because of hate, or because of envy, or because they cannot rest for sorrow. But of any who return for that which is not evil – where is it written? Surely the common history of them is like that which we have this night seen: much that is horrible and much that is wicked and nothing of that which is beautiful or true.'

Now this I said that I might tempt him. And he made even the answer I desired, by uttering the story which is hereafter set down:

'Long ago, in the days of a daimyō whose name has been forgotten, there lived in this old city a young man and a maid who loved each other very much. Their names are not remembered, but their story remains. From infancy they had been betrothed; and as children they played together, for their

[1] 'It is excellent: I pray you give me a little more.'
[2] *Kwashi*: Japanese confectionery.

parents were neighbours. And as they grew up, they became always fonder of each other.

'Before the youth had become a man, his parents died. But he was able to enter the service of a rich samurai, an officer of high rank, who had been a friend of his people. And his protector soon took him into great favour, seeing him to be courteous, intelligent, and apt at arms. So the young man hoped to find himself shortly in a position that would make it possible for him to marry his betrothed. But war broke out in the north and east; and he was summoned suddenly to follow his master to the field. Before departing, however, he was able to see the girl; and they exchanged pledges in the presence of her parents; and he promised, should he remain alive, to return within a year from that day to marry his betrothed.

'After his going much time passed without news of him, for there was no post in that time as now; and the girl grieved so much for thinking of the chances of war that she became all white and thin and weak. Then at last she heard of him through a messenger sent from the army to bear news to the daimyō, and once again a letter was brought to her by another messenger. And thereafter there came no word. Long is a year to one who waits. And the year passed, and he did not return.

'Other seasons passed, and still he did not come; and she thought him dead; and she sickened and lay down, and died, and was buried. Then her old parents, who had no other child, grieved unspeakably, and came to hate their home for the lonesomeness of it. After a time they resolved to sell all they had, and to set out upon a sengaji, – the great pilgrimage to the Thousand Temples of the Nichiren-Shū, which requires many years to perform. So they sold their small house with all that it contained, excepting the ancestral tablets, and the holy things which must never be sold, and the ihai of their buried

daughter, which were placed, according to the custom of those about to leave their native place, in the family temple. Now the family was of the Nichiren-Shū; and their temple was Myōkōji.

'They had been gone only four days when the young man who had been betrothed to their daughter returned to the city. He had attempted, with the permission of his master, to fulfil his promise. But the provinces upon his way were full of war, and the roads and passes were guarded by troops, and he had been long delayed by many difficulties. And when he heard of his misfortune he sickened for grief, and many days remained without knowledge of anything, like one about to die.

'But when he began to recover his strength, all the pain of memory came back again; and he regretted that he had not died. Then he resolved to kill himself upon the grave of his betrothed; and, as soon as he was able to go out unobserved, he took his sword and went to the cemetery where the girl was buried: it is a lonesome place, – the cemetery of Myōkōji. There he found her tomb, and knelt before it, and prayed and wept, and whispered to her that which he was about to do. And suddenly he heard her voice cry to him: "*Anata!*" and felt her hand upon his hand; and he turned, and saw her kneeling beside him, smiling, and beautiful as he remembered her, only a little pale. Then his heart leaped so that he could not speak for the wonder and the doubt and the joy of that moment. But she said: "Do not doubt: it is really I. I am not dead. It was all a mistake. I was buried, because my people thought me dead, – buried too soon. And my own parents thought me dead, and went upon a pilgrimage. Yet you see, I am not dead, – not a ghost. It is I: do not doubt it! And I have seen your heart, and that was worth all the waiting, and the pain. . . . But now let us go away at once to another city, so that people

may not know this thing and trouble us; for all still believe me dead."

'And they went away, no one observing them. And they went even to the village of Minobu, which is in the province of Kai. For there is a famous temple of the Nichiren-Shū in that place; and the girl had said: "I know that in the course of their pilgrimage my parents will surely visit Minobu: so that if we dwell there, they will find us, and we shall be all again together." And when they came to Minobu, she said: "Let us open a little shop." And they opened a little food-shop, on the wide way leading to the holy place; and there they sold cakes for children, and toys, and food for pilgrims. For two years they so lived and prospered; and there was a son born to them.

'Now when the child was a year and two months old, the parents of the wife came in the course of their pilgrimage to Minobu; and they stopped at the little shop to buy food. And seeing their daughter's betrothed, they cried out and wept and asked questions. Then he made them enter, and bowed down before them, and astonished them, saying: "Truly as I speak it, your daughter is not dead; and she is my wife; and we have a son. And she is even now within the farther room, lying down with the child. I pray you go in at once and gladden her, for her heart longs for the moment of seeing you again."

'So while he busied himself in making all things ready for their comfort, they entered the inner room very softly, – the mother first.

'They found the child asleep; but the mother they did not find. She seemed to have gone out for a little while only: her pillow was still warm. They waited long for her: then they began to seek her. But never was she seen again.

'And they understood only when they found beneath the coverings which had covered the mother and child, something

which they remembered having left years before in the temple of Myōkōji, – a little mortuary tablet, – the ihai of their buried daughter.'

I suppose I must have looked thoughtful after this tale; for the old man said:

'Perhaps the Master honourably thinks concerning the story that it is foolish?'

'Nay, Kinjurō, the story is in my heart.'

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Japanese Smile

*

§ 1

THOSE whose ideas of the world and its wonders have been formed chiefly by novels and romance still indulge a vague belief that the East is more serious than the West. Those who judge things from a higher standpoint argue, on the contrary, that, under present conditions, the West must be more serious than the East; and also that gravity, or even something resembling its converse, may exist only as a fashion. But the fact is that in this, as in all other questions, no rule susceptible of application to either half of humanity can be accurately framed. Scientifically, we can do no more just now than study certain contrasts in a general way, without hoping to explain satisfactorily the highly complex causes which produced them. One such contrast, of particular interest, is that afforded by the English and the Japanese.

It is a commonplace to say that the English are a serious people, – not superficially serious, but serious all the way down to the bed-rock of the race character. It is almost equally safe to say that the Japanese are not very serious, either above or below the surface, even as compared with races much less serious than our own. And in the same proportion, at least, that they are less serious, they are more happy: they still, perhaps, remain the happiest people in the civilized world. We serious folk of the West cannot call ourselves very happy. Indeed, we do not yet fully know how serious we are; and it would probably frighten us to learn how much more serious we are likely to become under the ever-swelling pressure of industrial life. It is, possibly, by long sojourn among a people less gravely disposed that we can best learn our own temperament. This conviction came to me

very strongly when, after having lived for nearly three years in the interior of Japan, I returned to English life for a few days at the open port of Kobe. To hear English once more spoken by Englishmen touched me more than I could have believed possible; but this feeling lasted only for a moment. My object was to make some necessary purchases. Accompanying me was a Japanese friend, to whom all that foreign life was utterly new and wonderful, and who asked me this curious question: 'Why is it that the foreigners never smile? You smile and bow when you speak to them; but they never smile. Why?'

The fact was, I had fallen altogether into Japanese habits and ways, and had got out of touch with Western life; and my companion's question first made me aware that I had been acting somewhat curiously. It also seemed to me a fair illustration of the difficulty of mutual comprehension between the two races, – each quite naturally, though quite erroneously, estimating the manners and motives of the other by its own. If the Japanese are puzzled by English gravity, the English are, to say the least, equally puzzled by Japanese levity. The Japanese speak of the 'angry faces' of the foreigners. The foreigners speak with strong contempt of the Japanese smile: they suspect it to signify insincerity; indeed, some declare it cannot possibly signify anything else. Only a few of the more observant have recognized it as an enigma worth studying. One of my Yokohama friends – a thoroughly lovable man, who had passed more than half his life in the open ports of the East – said to me, just before my departure for the interior: 'Since you are going to study Japanese life, perhaps you will be able to find out something for me. I *can't* understand the Japanese smile. Let me tell you one experience out of many. One day, as I was driving down from the Bluff, I saw an empty kuruma coming up on the wrong side of the curve. I could not have pulled up in time if I had tried; but I didn't try, because I

didn't think there was any particular danger. I only yelled to the man in Japanese to get to the other side of the road; instead of which he simply backed his kuruma against a wall on the lower side of the curve, with the shafts outwards. At the rate I was going, there wasn't room even to swerve; and the next minute one of the shafts of that kuruma was in my horse's shoulder. The man wasn't hurt at all. When I saw the way my horse was bleeding, I quite lost my temper, and struck the man over the head with the butt of my whip. He looked right into my face and smiled, and then bowed. I can see that smile now. I felt as if I had been knocked down. The smile utterly nonplussed me, – killed all my anger instantly. Mind you, it was a polite smile. But what did it mean? Why the devil did the man smile? I can't understand it.'

Neither, at that time, could I; but the meaning of much more mysterious smiles has since been revealed to me. A Japanese can smile in the teeth of death, and usually does. But he then smiles for the same reason that he smiles at other times. There is neither defiance nor hypocrisy in the smile; nor is it to be confounded with that smile of sickly resignation which we are apt to associate with weakness of character. It is an elaborate and long-cultivated etiquette. It is also a silent language. But any effort to interpret it according to Western notions of physiognomical expression would be just about as successful as an attempt to interpret Chinese ideographs by their real or fancied resemblance to shapes of familiar things.

First impressions, being largely instinctive, are scientifically recognized as partly trustworthy; and the very first impression produced by the Japanese smile is not far from the truth. The stranger cannot fail to notice the generally happy and smiling character of the native faces; and this first impression is, in most cases, wonderfully pleasant. The Japanese smile at first charms. It is only at a later day, when one has observed the

same smile under extraordinary circumstances, – in moments of pain, shame, disappointment, – that one becomes suspicious of it. Its apparent inopportuneness may even, on certain occasions, cause violent anger. Indeed, many of the difficulties between foreign residents and their native servants have been due to the smile. Any man who believes in the British tradition that a good servant must be solemn is not likely to endure with patience the smile of his 'boy.' At present, however, this particular phase of Western eccentricity is becoming more fully recognized by the Japanese; they are beginning to learn that the average English-speaking foreigner hates smiling, and is apt to consider it insulting; wherefore Japanese employees at the open ports have generally ceased to smile, and have assumed an air of sullenness.

At this moment there comes to me the recollection of a queer story told by a lady of Yokohama about one of her Japanese servants. 'My Japanese nurse came to me the other day, smiling as if something very pleasant had happened, and said that her husband was dead, and that she wanted permission to attend his funeral. I told her she could go. It seems they burned the man's body. Well, in the evening she returned, and showed me a vase containing some ashes of bones (I saw a tooth among them); and she said: "That is my husband." And she actually *laughed* as she said it! Did you ever hear of such disgusting creatures?'

It would have been quite impossible to convince the narrator of this incident that the demeanour of her servant, instead of being heartless, might have been heroic, and capable of a very touching interpretation. Even one not a Philistine might be deceived in such a case by appearances. But quite a number of the foreign residents of the open ports are pure Philistines, and never try to look below the surface of the life around them, except as hostile critics. My Yokohama friend who told me the

story about the kurumaya was quite differently disposed: he recognized the error of judging by appearances.

§ 2

Miscomprehension of the Japanese smile has more than once led to extremely unpleasant results, as happened in the case of T–, a Yokohama merchant of former days. T– had employed in some capacity (I think partly as a teacher of Japanese) a nice old samurai, who wore, according to the fashion of the era, a queue and two swords. The English and the Japanese do not understand each other very well now; but at the period in question they understood each other much less. The Japanese servants at first acted in foreign employ precisely as they would have acted in the service of distinguished Japanese;[1] and this innocent mistake provoked a good deal of abuse and cruelty. Finally the discovery was made that to treat Japanese like West Indian negroes might be very dangerous.

[1] The reader will find it well worth his while to consult the chapter entitled 'Domestic Service,' in Miss Bacon's *Japanese Girls and Women*, for an interesting and just presentation of the practical side of the subject, as relating to servants of both sexes. The poetical side, however, is not treated of,– perhaps because intimately connected with religious beliefs which one writing from the Christian standpoint could not be expected to consider sympathetically. Domestic service in ancient Japan was both transfigured and regulated by religion; and the force of the religious sentiment concerning it may be divined from the Buddhist saying, still current:

Oya-ko wa is-se,
Fūfu wa ni-se,
Shujū wa san-se.

The relation of parent and child endures for the space of one life only; that of husband and wife for the space of two lives; but the relation between master and servant continues for the period of three existences.

A certain number of foreigners were killed, with good moral consequences.

But I am digressing. T – was rather pleased with his old samurai, though quite unable to understand his Oriental politeness, his prostrations, or the meaning of the small gifts which he presented occasionally, with an exquisite courtesy entirely wasted upon T –. One day he came to ask a favour. (I think it was the eve of the Japanese New Year, when everybody needs money, for reasons not here to be dwelt upon.) The favour was that T – would lend him a little money upon one of his swords, the long one. It was a very beautiful weapon, and the merchant saw that it was also very valuable, and lent the money without hesitation. Some weeks later the old man was able to redeem his sword.

What caused the beginning of the subsequent unpleasantness nobody now remembers. Perhaps T – 's nerves got out of order. At all events, one day he became very angry with the old man, who submitted to the expression of his wrath with bows and smiles. This made him still more angry, and he used some extremely bad language; but the old man still bowed and smiled; wherefore he was ordered to leave the house. But the old man continued to smile, at which T –, losing all self-control, struck him. And then T – suddenly became afraid, for the long sword instantly leaped from its sheath, and swirled above him; and the old man ceased to seem old. Now, in the grasp of anyone who knows how to use it, the razor-edged blade of a Japanese sword wielded with both hands can take a head off with extreme facility. But, to T – 's astonishment, the old samurai, almost in the same moment, returned the blade to its sheath with the skill of a practised swordsman, turned upon his heel, and withdrew.

Then T – wondered, and sat down to think. He began to remember some nice things about the old man, – the many

kindnesses unasked and unpaid, the curious little gifts, the impeccable honesty. T – began to feel ashamed. He tried to console himself with the thought: 'Well, it was his own fault; he had no right to laugh at me when he knew I was angry.' Indeed, T – even resolved to make amends when an opportunity should offer.

But no opportunity ever came, because on the same evening the old man performed hara-kiri, after the manner of a samurai. He left a very beautifully written letter explaining his reasons. For a samurai to receive an unjust blow without avenging it was a shame not to be borne. He had received such a blow. Under any other circumstances he might have avenged it. But the circumstances were, in this instance, of a very peculiar kind. His code of honour forbade him to use his sword upon the man to whom he had pledged it once for money, in an hour of need. And being thus unable to use his sword, there remained for him only the alternative of an honourable suicide.

In order to render this story less disagreeable, the reader may suppose that T – was really very sorry, and behaved generously to the family of the old man. What he must not suppose is that T – was ever able to imagine why the old man had smiled the smile which led to the outrage and the tragedy.

§ 3

To comprehend the Japanese smile, one must be able to enter a little into the ancient, natural, and popular life of Japan. From the modernized upper classes nothing is to be learned. The deeper signification of race differences is being daily more and more illustrated in the effects of the higher education. Instead of creating any community of feeling, it appears only to widen the distance between the Occidental and the Oriental. Some foreign observers have declared that it does this by enormously developing certain latent peculiarities, – among

others an inherent materialism little perceptible among the common people. This explanation is one I cannot quite agree with; but it is at least undeniable that, the more highly he is cultivated, according to Western methods, the farther is the Japanese psychologically removed from us. Under the new education, his character seems to crystallize into something of singular hardness, and to Western observation, at least, of singular opacity. Emotionally, the Japanese child appears incomparably closer to us than the Japanese mathematician, the peasant than the statesman. Between the most elevated class of thoroughly modernized Japanese and the Western thinker anything akin to intellectual sympathy is non-existent: it is replaced on the native side by a cold and faultless politeness. Those influences which in other lands appear most potent to develop the higher emotions seem here to have the extraordinary effect of suppressing them. We are accustomed abroad to associate emotional sensibility with intellectual expansion: it would be a grievous error to apply this rule in Japan. Even the foreign teacher in an ordinary school can feel, year by year, his pupils drifting farther away from him, as they pass from class to class; in various higher educational institutions, the separation widens yet more rapidly, so that, prior to graduation, students may become to their professor little more than casual acquaintances. The enigma is perhaps, to some extent, a physiological one, requiring scientific explanation; but its solution must first be sought in ancestral habits of life and of imagination. It can be fully discussed only when its natural causes are understood; and these, we may be sure, are not simple. By some observers it is asserted that because the higher education in Japan has not yet had the effect of stimulating the higher emotions to the Occidental pitch, its developing power cannot have been exerted uniformly and wisely, but in special directions only, at the cost of

character. Yet this theory involves the unwarrantable assumption that character can be created by education; and it ignores the fact that the best results are obtained by affording opportunity for the exercise of pre-existing inclination rather than by any system of teaching.

The causes of the phenomenon must be looked for in the race character; and whatever the higher education may accomplish in the remote future, it can scarcely be expected to transform nature. But does it at present atrophy certain finer tendencies? I think that it unavoidably does, for the simple reason that, under existing conditions, the moral and mental powers are overtasked by its requirements. All that wonderful national spirit of duty, of patience, of self-sacrifice, anciently directed to social, moral, or religious idealism, must, under the discipline of the higher training, be concentrated upon an end which not only demands, but exhausts its fullest exercise. For that end, to be accomplished at all, must be accomplished in the face of difficulties that the Western student rarely encounters, and could scarcely be made even to understand. All those moral qualities which made the old Japanese character admirable are certainly the same which make the modern Japanese student the most indefatigable, the most docile, the most ambitious in the world. But they are also qualities which urge him to efforts in excess of his natural powers, with the frequent result of mental and moral enervation. The nation has entered upon a period of intellectual overstrain. Consciously or unconsciously, in obedience to sudden necessity, Japan has undertaken nothing less than the tremendous task of forcing mental expansion up to the highest existing standard; and this means forcing the development of the nervous system. For the desired intellectual change, to be accomplished within a few generations, must involve a physiological change never to be effected with-

out terrible cost. In other words, Japan has attempted too much; yet under the circumstances she could not have attempted less. Happily, even among the poorest of her poor the educational policy of the Government is seconded with an astonishing zeal; the entire nation has plunged into study with a fervour of which it is utterly impossible to convey any adequate conception in this little essay. Yet I may cite a touching example. Immediately after the frightful earthquake of 1891, the children of the ruined cities of Gifu and Aichi, crouching among the ashes of their homes, cold and hungry and shelterless, surrounded by horror and misery unspeakable, still continued their small studies, using tiles of their own burnt dwellings in lieu of slates, and bits of lime for chalk, even while the earth still trembled beneath them.[1] What future miracles may justly be expected from the amazing power of purpose such a fact reveals!

But it is true that as yet the results of the higher training have not been altogether happy. Among the Japanese of the old regime one encounters a courtesy, an unselfishness, a grace of pure goodness, impossible to overpraise. Among the modernized of the new generation these have almost disappeared. One meets a class of young men who ridicule the old times and the old ways without having been able to elevate themselves above the vulgarism of imitation and the commonplaces of shallow scepticism. What has become of the noble and charming qualities they must have inherited from their fathers? Is it not possible that the best of those qualities have been transmuted into mere effort, – an effort so excessive as to have exhausted character, leaving it without weight or balance?

It is to the still fluid, mobile, natural existence of the com-

[1] The shocks continued, though with lessening frequency and violence, for more than six months after the cataclysm.

mon people that one must look for the meaning of some apparent differences in the race feeling and emotional expression of the West and the Far East. With those gentle, kindly, sweet-hearted folk, who smile at life, love, and death alike, it is possible to enjoy community of feeling in simple, natural things; and by familiarity and sympathy we can learn why they smile.

The Japanese child is born with this happy tendency, which is fostered through all the period of home education. But it is cultivated with the same exquisiteness that is shown in the cultivation of the natural tendencies of a garden plant. The smile is taught like the bow; like the prostration; like that little sibilant sucking-in of the breath which follows, as a token of pleasure, the salutation to a superior; like all the elaborate and beautiful etiquette of the old courtesy. Laughter is not encouraged, for obvious reasons. But the smile is to be used upon all pleasant occasions, when speaking to a superior or to an equal, and even upon occasions which are not pleasant; it is a part of deportment. The most agreeable face is the smiling face; and to present always the most agreeable face possible to parents, relatives, teachers, friends, well-wishers, is a rule of life. And furthermore, it is a rule of life to turn constantly to the outer world a mien of happiness, to convey to others as far as possible a pleasant impression. Even though the heart is breaking, it is a social duty to smile bravely. On the other hand, to look serious or unhappy is rude, because this may cause anxiety or pain to those who love us; it is likewise foolish, since it may excite unkindly curiosity on the part of those who love us not. Cultivated from childhood as a duty, the smile soon becomes instinctive. In the mind of the poorest peasant lives the conviction that to exhibit the expression of one's personal sorrow or pain or anger is rarely useful, and always unkind. Hence, although natural grief must have, in Japan as

elsewhere, its natural issue, an uncontrollable burst of tears in the presence of superiors or guests is an impoliteness; and the first words of even the most unlettered countrywoman, after the nerves give way in such a circumstance, are invariably: 'Pardon my selfishness in that I have been so rude!' The reasons for the smile, be it also observed, are not only moral; they are to some extent æsthetic; they partly represent the same idea which regulated the expression of suffering in Greek art. But they are much more moral than æsthetic, as we shall presently observe.

From this primary etiquette of the smile there has been developed a secondary etiquette, the observance of which has frequently impelled foreigners to form the most cruel misjudgments as to Japanese sensibility. It is the native custom that whenever a painful or shocking fact *must* be told, the announcement should be made, by the sufferer, with a smile.[1] The graver the subject, the more accentuated the smile; and when the matter is very unpleasant to the person speaking of it, the smile often changes to a low, soft laugh. However bitterly the mother who has lost her first-born may have wept at the funeral, it is probable that, if in your service, she will tell of her bereavement with a smile: like the Preacher, she holds that there is a time to weep and a time to laugh. It was long before I myself could understand how it was possible for those whom I believed to have loved a person recently dead to announce to me that death with a laugh. Yet the laugh was politeness carried to the utmost point of self-abnegation. It signified: 'This you might honourably think to be an unhappy event; pray do not suffer Your Superiority to feel concern about so inferior a matter, and pardon the necessity which causes us to outrage politeness by speaking about such an affair at all.'

[1] Of course the converse is the rule in condoling with the sufferer.

The key to the mystery of the most unaccountable smiles is Japanese politeness. The servant sentenced to dismissal for a fault prostrates himself, and asks for pardon with a smile. That smile indicates the very reverse of callousness or insolence: 'Be assured that I am satisfied with the great justice of your honourable sentence, and that I am now aware of the gravity of my fault. Yet my sorrow and my necessity have caused me to indulge the unreasonable hope that I may be forgiven for my great rudeness in asking pardon.' The youth or girl beyond the age of childish tears, when punished for some error, receives the punishment with a smile which means: 'No evil feeling arises in my heart; much worse than this my fault has deserved.' And the kurumaya cut by the whip of my Yokohama friend smiled for a similar reason, as my friend must have intuitively felt, since the smile at once disarmed him: 'I was very wrong, and you are right to be angry: I deserve to be struck, and therefore feel no resentment.'

But it should be understood that the poorest and humblest Japanese is rarely submissive under injustice. His apparent docility is due chiefly to his moral sense. The foreigner who strikes a native for sport may have reason to find that he has made a serious mistake. The Japanese are not to be trifled with; and brutal attempts to trifle with them have cost several worthless lives.

Even after the foregoing explanations, the incident of the Japanese nurse may still seem incomprehensible; but this, I feel quite sure, is because the narrator either suppressed or overlooked certain facts in the case. In the first half of the story, all is perfectly clear. When announcing her husband's death, the young servant smiled, in accordance with the native formality already referred to. What is quite incredible is that, of her own accord, she should have invited the attention of her mistress to the contents of the vase, or funeral urn. If she

knew enough of Japanese politeness to smile in announcing her husband's death, she must certainly have known enough to prevent her from perpetrating such an error. She could have shown the vase and its contents only in obedience to some real or fancied command; and when so doing, it is more than possible she may have uttered the low, soft laugh which accompanies either the unavoidable performance of a painful duty, or the enforced utterance of a painful statement. My own opinion is that she was obliged to gratify a wanton curiosity. Her smile or laugh would then have signified: 'Do not suffer your honourable feelings to be shocked upon my unworthy account; it is indeed very rude of me, even at your honourable request, to mention so contemptible a thing as my sorrow.'

§ 4

But the Japanese smile must not be imagined as a kind of *sourire figé*, worn perpetually as a soul-mask. Like other matters of deportment, it is regulated by an etiquette which varies in different classes of society. As a rule, the old samurai were not given to smiling upon all occasions; they reserved their amiability for superiors and intimates, and would seem to have maintained toward inferiors an austere reserve. The dignity of the Shintō priesthood has become proverbial; and for centuries the gravity of the Confucian code was mirrored in the decorum of magistrates and officials. From ancient times the nobility affected a still loftier reserve; and the solemnity of rank deepened through all the hierarchies up to that awful state surrounding the Tenshi-Sama, upon whose face no living man might look. But in private life the demeanour of the highest had its amiable relaxation; and even to-day, with some hopelessly modernized exceptions, the noble, the judge, the high priest, the august minister, the military officer,

will resume at home, in the intervals of duty, the charming habits of the antique courtesy.

The smile which illuminates conversation is in itself but a small detail of that courtesy; but the sentiment which it symbolizes certainly comprises the larger part. If you happen to have a cultivated Japanese friend who has remained in all things truly Japanese, whose character has remained untouched by the new egotism and by foreign influences, you will probably be able to study in him the particular social traits of the whole people, – traits in his case exquisitely accentuated and polished. You will observe that, as a rule, he never speaks of himself, and that, in reply to searching personal questions, he will answer as vaguely and briefly as possible, with a polite bow of thanks. But, on the other hand, he will ask many questions about yourself: your opinions, your ideas, even trifling details of your daily life, appear to have deep interest for him; and you will probably have occasion to note that he never forgets anything which he has learned concerning you. Yet there are certain rigid limits to his kindly curiosity, and perhaps even to his observation: he will never refer to any disagreeable or painful matter, and he will seem to remain blind to eccentricities or small weaknesses, if you have any. To your face he will never praise you; but he will never laugh at you nor criticize you. Indeed, you will find that he never criticizes persons, but only actions in their results. As a private adviser, he will not even directly criticize a plan of which he disapproves, but is apt to suggest a new one in some such guarded language as: 'Perhaps it might be more to your immediate interest to do thus and so.' When obliged to speak of others, he will refer to them in a curious indirect fashion, by citing and combining a number of incidents sufficiently characteristic to form a picture. But in that event the incidents narrated will almost certainly be of a nature to awaken interest, and to create

a favourable impression. This indirect way of conveying information is essentially Confucian. 'Even when you have no doubts,' says the *Li-Ki*, 'do not let what you say appear as your own view.' And it is quite probable that you will notice many other traits in your friend requiring some knowledge of the Chinese classics to understand. But no such knowledge is necessary to convince you of his exquisite consideration for others, and his studied suppression of self. Among no other civilized people is the secret of happy living so thoroughly comprehended as among the Japanese; by no other race is the truth so widely understood that our pleasure in life must depend upon the happiness of those about us, and consequently upon the cultivation in ourselves of unselfishness and of patience. For which reason, in Japanese society, sarcasm, irony, cruel wit, are not indulged. I might almost say that they have no existence in refined life. A personal failing is not made the subject of ridicule or reproach; an eccentricity is not commented upon; an involuntary mistake excites no laughter.

Stiffened somewhat by the Chinese conservatism of the old conditions, it is true that this ethical system was maintained to the extreme of giving fixity to ideas, and at the cost of individuality. And yet, if regulated by a broader comprehension of social requirements, if expanded by scientific understanding of the freedom essential to intellectual evolution, the very same moral policy is that through which the highest and happiest results may be obtained. But as actually practised it was not favourable to originality; it rather tended to enforce that amiable mediocrity of opinion and imagination which still prevails. Wherefore a foreign dweller in the interior cannot but long sometimes for the sharp, erratic inequalities of Western life, with its larger joys and pains and its more comprehensive sympathies. But sometimes only, for the intellectual loss is really more than compensated by the social charm;

and there can remain no doubt in the mind of one who even partly understands the Japanese, that they are still the best people in the world to live among.

§ 5

As I pen these lines, there returns to me the vision of a Kyōto night. While passing through some wonderfully thronged and illuminated street, of which I cannot remember the name, I had turned aside to look at a statue of Jizō, before the entrance of a very small temple. The figure was that of a kozō, an acolyte, – a beautiful boy; and its smile was a bit of divine realism. As I stood gazing, a young lad, perhaps ten years old, ran up beside me, joined his little hands before the image, bowed his head and prayed for a moment in silence. He had but just left some comrades, and the joy and glow of play were still upon his face; and his unconscious smile was so strangely like the smile of the child of stone that the boy seemed the twin brother of the god. And then I thought: 'The smile of bronze or stone is not a copy only; but that which the Buddhist sculptor symbolizes thereby must be the explanation of the smile of the race.'

That was long ago; but the idea which then suggested itself still seems to me true. However foreign to Japanese soil the origin of Buddhist art, yet the smile of the people signifies the same conception as the smile of the Bosatsu, – the happiness that is born of self-control and self-suppression. 'If a man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand, and another conquer himself, he who conquers himself is the greatest of conquerors.' 'Not even a god can change into defeat the victory of the man who has vanquished himself.'[1] Such Buddhist texts as these – and they are many – assuredly express, though they cannot be assumed to have created, those

[1] Dhammapada.

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moral tendencies which form the highest charm of the Japanese character. And the whole moral idealism of the race seems to me to have been imaged in that marvellous Buddha of Kamakura, whose countenance, 'calm like a deep, still water,' [1] expresses, as perhaps no other work of human hands can have expressed, the eternal truth: 'There is no higher happiness than rest.'[2] It is toward that infinite calm that the aspirations of the Orient have been turned; and the ideal of the Supreme Self-Conquest it has made its own. Even now, though agitated at its surface by those new influences which must sooner or later move it even to its uttermost depths, the Japanese mind retains, as compared with the thought of the West, a wonderful placidity. It dwells but little, if at all, upon those ultimate abstract questions about which we most concern ourselves. Neither does it comprehend our interest in them as we desire to be comprehended. 'That you should not be indifferent to religious speculations,' a Japanese scholar once observed to me, 'is quite natural; but it is equally natural that we should never trouble ourselves about them. The philosophy of Buddhism has a profundity far exceeding that of your Western theology, and we have studied it. We have sounded the depths of speculation only to find that there are depths unfathomable below those depths; we have voyaged to the farthest limit that thought may sail, only to find that the horizon for ever recedes. And you, you have remained for many thousand years as children playing in a stream but ignorant of the sea. Only now you have reached its shore by another path than ours, and the vastness is for you a new wonder; and you would sail to Nowhere because you have seen the infinite over the sands of life.'

Will Japan be able to assimilate Western civilization, as she did Chinese more than ten centuries ago, and nevertheless

[1] Dammikkasutta. [2] Dhammapada.

preserve her own peculiar modes of thought and feeling? One striking fact is hopeful: that the Japanese admiration for Western material superiority is by no means extended to Western morals. Oriental thinkers do not commit the serious blunder of confounding mechanical with ethical progress, nor have any failed to perceive the moral weaknesses of our boasted civilization. One Japanese writer has expressed his judgment of things Occidental after a fashion that deserves to be noticed by a larger circle of readers than that for which it was originally written:

'Order or disorder in a nation does not depend upon something that falls from the sky or rises from the earth. It is determined by the disposition of the people. The pivot on which the public disposition turns towards order or disorder is the point where public and private motives separate. If the people be influenced chiefly by public considerations, order is assured; if by private, disorder is inevitable. Public considerations are those that prompt the proper observance of duties; their prevalence signifies peace and prosperity in the case alike of families, communities, and nations. Private considerations are those suggested by selfish motives: when they prevail, disturbance and disorder are unavoidable. As members of a family, our duty is to look after the welfare of that family; as units of a nation, our duty is to work for the good of the nation. To regard our family affairs with all the interest due to our family and our national affairs with all the interest due to our nation, – this is to fitly discharge our duty, and to be guided by public considerations. On the other hand, to regard the affairs of the nation as if they were our own family affairs, – this is to be influenced by private motives and to stray from the path of duty. . . .

'Selfishness is born in every man; to indulge it freely is to

become a beast. Therefore it is that sages preach the principles of duty and propriety, justice and morality, providing restraints for private aims and encouragements for public spirit. . . . What we know of Western civilization is that it struggled on through long centuries in a confused condition and finally attained a state of some order; but that even this order, not being based upon such principles as those of the natural and immutable distinctions between sovereign and subject, parent and child, with all their corresponding rights and duties, is liable to constant change according to the growth of human ambitions and human aims. Admirably suited to persons whose actions are controlled by selfish ambition, the adoption of this system in Japan is naturally sought by a certain class of politicians. From a superficial point of view, the Occidental form of society is very attractive, inasmuch as, being the outcome of a free development of human desires from ancient times, it represents the very extreme of luxury and extravagance. Briefly speaking, the state of things obtaining in the West is based upon the free play of human selfishness, and can only be reached by giving full sway to that quality. Social disturbances are little heeded in the Occident; yet they are at once the evidences and the factors of the present evil state of affairs. . . . Do Japanese enamoured of Western ways propose to have their nation's history written in similar terms? Do they seriously contemplate turning their country into a new field for experiments in Western civilization? . . .

'In the Orient, from ancient times, national government has been based on benevolence, and directed to securing the welfare and happiness of the people. No political creed has ever held that intellectual strength should be cultivated for the purpose of exploiting inferiority and ignorance. . . . The inhabitants of this empire live, for the most part, by manual labour. Let them be never so industrious, they hardly earn

enough to supply their daily wants. They earn on the average about twenty sen daily. There is no question with them of aspiring to wear fine clothes or to inhabit handsome houses. Neither can they hope to reach positions of fame and honour. What offence have these poor people committed that they, too, should not share the benefits of Western civilization? . . . By some, indeed, their condition is explained on the hypothesis that their desires do not prompt them to better themselves. There is no truth in such a supposition. They have desires, but nature has limited their capacity to satisfy them; their duty as men limits it, and the amount of labour physically possible to a human being limits it. They achieve as much as their opportunities permit. The best and finest products of their labour they reserve for the wealthy; the worst and roughest they keep for their own use. Yet there is nothing in human society that does not owe its existence to labour. Now, to satisfy the desires of one luxurious man, the toil of a thousand is needed. Surely it is monstrous that those who owe to labour the pleasures suggested by their civilization should forget what they owe to the labourer, and treat him as if he were not a fellow-being. But civilization, according to the interpretation of the Occident, serves only to satisfy men of large desires. It is of no benefit to the masses, but is simply a system under which ambitions compete to accomplish their aims. . . . That the Occidental system is gravely disturbing to the order and peace of a country is seen by men who have eyes, and heard by men who have ears. The future of Japan under such a system fills us with anxiety. A system based on the principle that ethics and religion are made to serve human ambition naturally accords with the wishes of selfish individuals; and such theories as those embodied in the modern formula of liberty and equality annihilate the established relations of society, and outrage decorum and propriety. . . .

Absolute equality and absolute liberty being unattainable, the limits prescribed by right and duty are supposed to be set. But as each person seeks to have as much right and to be burdened with as little duty as possible, the results are endless disputes and legal contentions. The principles of liberty and equality may succeed in changing the organization of nations, in overthrowing the lawful distinctions of social rank, in reducing all men to one nominal level; but they can never accomplish the equal distribution of wealth and property. Consider America. . . . It is plain that if the mutual rights of men and their status are made to depend on degrees of wealth, the majority of the people, being without wealth, must fail to establish their rights; whereas the minority who are wealthy will assert their rights, and, under society's sanction, will exact oppressive duties from the poor, neglecting the dictates of humanity and benevolence. The adoption of these principles of liberty and equality in Japan would vitiate the good and peaceful customs of our country, render the general disposition of the people harsh and unfeeling, and prove finally a source of calamity to the masses. . . .

'Though at first sight Occidental civilization presents an attractive appearance, adapted as it is to the gratification of selfish desires, yet, since its basis is the hypothesis that men's wishes constitute natural laws, it must ultimately end in disappointment and demoralization. . . . Occidental nations have become what they are after passing through conflicts and vicissitudes of the most serious kind; and it is their fate to continue the struggle. Just now their motive elements are in partial equilibrium, and their social condition is more or less ordered. But if this slight equilibrium happens to be disturbed, they will be thrown once more into confusion and change, until, after a period of renewed struggle and suffering, temporary stability is once more attained. The poor and

powerless of the present may become the wealthy and strong of the future, and *vice versa*. Perpetual disturbance is their doom. Peaceful equality can never be attained until built up among the ruins of annihilated Western states and the ashes of extinct Western peoples.' [1]

Surely, with perceptions like these, Japan may hope to avert some of the social perils which menace her. Yet it appears inevitable that her approaching transformation must be coincident with a moral decline. Forced into the vast industrial competition of nations whose civilizations were never based on altruism, she must eventually develop those qualities of which the comparative absence made all the wonderful charm of her life. The national character must continue to harden, as it has begun to harden already. But it should never be forgotten that Old Japan was quite as much in advance of the nineteenth century morally as she was behind it materially. She had made morality instinctive, after having made it rational. She had realized, though within restricted limits, several among those social conditions which our ablest thinkers regard as the happiest and the highest. Throughout all the grades of her complex society she had cultivated both the com-

[1] These extracts from a translation in the *Japan Daily Mail*, November 19, 20, 1890, of Viscount Tōrio's famous conservative essay do not give a fair idea of the force and logic of the whole. The essay is too long to quote entire; and any extracts from the *Mail's* admirable translation suffer by their isolation from the singular chains of ethical, religious, and philosophical reasoning which bind the various parts of the composition together. The essay was furthermore remarkable as the production of a native scholar totally uninfluenced by Western thought. He correctly predicted those social and political disturbances which have occurred in Japan since the opening of the new parliament. Viscount Tōrio is also well known as a master of Buddhist philosophy. He holds a high rank in the Japanese army.

prehension and the practice of public and private duties after a manner for which it were vain to seek any Western parallel. Even her moral weakness was the result of an excess of that which all civilized religions have united in proclaiming virtue, – the self-sacrifice of the individual for the sake of the family, of the community, and of the nation. It was the weakness indicated by Percival Lowell in his *Soul of the Far East*, a book of which the consummate genius cannot be justly estimated without some personal knowledge of the Far East.[1]

[1] In expressing my earnest admiration of this wonderful book, I must, however, declare that several of its conclusions, and especially the final ones, represent the extreme reverse of my own beliefs on the subject. I do not think the Japanese without individuality; but their individuality is less superficially apparent, and reveals itself much less quickly, than that of Western people. I am also convinced that much of what we call 'personality' and 'force of character' in the West represents only the survival and recognition of primitive aggressive tendencies, more or less disguised by culture. What Mr. Spencer calls the *highest* individuation surely does not include extraordinary development of powers adapted to merely aggressive ends; and yet it is rather through these than through any others that Western individuality most commonly and readily manifests itself. Now there is, as yet, a remarkable scarcity in Japan, of domineering, brutal, aggressive, or morbid individuality. What does impress one as an apparent weakness in Japanese intellectual circles is the comparative absence of spontaneity, creative thought, original perceptivity of the highest order. Perhaps this seeming deficiency is racial: the peoples of the Far East seem to have been throughout their history receptive rather than creative. At all events I cannot believe Buddhism – originally the faith of an Aryan race – can be proven responsible. The total exclusion of Buddhist influence from public education would not seem to have been stimulating; for the masters of the old Buddhist philosophy still show a far higher capacity for thinking in relations than that of the average graduate of the Imperial University. Indeed, I am inclined to believe that an intellectual revival of Buddhism – a harmonizing of its loftier truths with the best and broadest teachings of modern science – would have the most important results for Japan.

The progress made by Japan in social morality, although greater than our own, was chiefly in the direction of mutual dependence. And it will be her coming duty to keep in view the teaching of that mighty thinker whose philosophy she has wisely accepted,[1] – the teaching that 'the highest individuation must be joined with the greatest mutual dependence,' and that, however seemingly paradoxical the statement, 'the law of progress is at once toward complete separateness and complete union.'

Yet to that past which her younger generation now affect to despise Japan will certainly one day look back, even as we ourselves look back to the old Greek civilization. She will learn to regret the forgotten capacity for simple pleasures, the lost sense of the pure joy of life, the old loving divine intimacy with nature, the marvellous dead art which reflected it. She will remember how much more luminous and beautiful the world then seemed. She will mourn for many things, – the old-fashioned patience and self-sacrifice, the ancient courtesy, the deep human poetry of the ancient faith. She will wonder at many things; but she will regret. Perhaps she will wonder most of all at the faces of the ancient gods, because their smile was once the likeness of her own.

A native scholar, Mr. Inouye Enryō, has actually founded at Tōkyō with this noble object in view, a college of philosophy which seems likely, at the present writing, to become an influential institution.

[1] Herbert Spencer.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Sayōnara!

*

§ 1

I AM going away, – very far away. I have already resigned my post as teacher, and am waiting only for my passport.

So many familiar faces have vanished that I feel now less regret at leaving than I should have felt six months ago. And nevertheless, the quaint old city has become so endeared to me by habit and association that the thought of never seeing it again is one I do not venture to dwell upon. I have been trying to persuade myself that some day I may return to this charming old house, in shadowy Kitaborimachi, though all the while painfully aware that in past experience such imaginations invariably preceded perpetual separation.

The facts are that all things are impermanent in the Province of the Gods; that the winters are very severe; and that I have received a call from the great Government college in Kyūshū, far south, where snow rarely falls. Also I have been very sick; and the prospect of a milder climate had much influence in shaping my decision.

But these few days of farewells have been full of charming surprises. To have the revelation of gratitude where you had no right to expect more than plain satisfaction with your performance of duty; to find affection where you supposed only good-will to exist: these are assuredly delicious experiences.

The teachers of both schools have sent me a farewell gift, – a superb pair of vases nearly three feet high, covered with designs representing birds, and flowering-trees overhanging a slope of beach where funny pink crabs are running about, – vases made in the old feudal days at Rakuzan, – rare souvenirs of Izumo. With the wonderful vases came a scroll bearing in

Chinese text the names of the thirty-two donors; and three of these are names of ladies, – the three lady-teachers of the Normal School.

The students of the Jinjō-Chūgakkō have also sent me a present, – the last contribution of two hundred and fifty-one pupils to my happiest memories of Matsue: a Japanese sword of the time of the daimyō. Silver karashishi with eyes of gold – in Izumo, the Lions of Shintō – swarm over the crimson lacquer of the sheath, and sprawl about the exquisite hilt. And the committee who brought the beautiful thing to my house requested me to accompany them forthwith to the college assembly-room, where the students were all waiting to bid me good-bye, after the old-time custom.

So I went there. And the things which we said to each other are hereafter set down.

§ 2

DEAR TEACHER: – You have been one of the best and most benevolent teachers we ever had. We thank you with all our heart for the knowledge we obtained through your kindest instruction. Every student in our school hoped you would stay with us at least three years. When we learned you had resolved to go to Kyūshū, we all felt our hearts sink with sorrow. We entreated our Director to find some way to keep you, but we discovered that could not be done. We have no words to express our feeling at this moment of farewell. We sent you a Japanese sword as a memory of us. It was only a poor ugly thing; we merely thought you would care for it as a mark of our gratitude. We will never forget your kindest instruction; and we all wish that you may ever be healthy and happy.

MASANABU ŌTANI,

Representing all the Students of the Middle School of Shimane-Ken.

MY DEAR BOYS: – I cannot tell you with what feelings I received your present; that beautiful sword with the silver karashishi ramping upon its sheath, or crawling through the silken cording of its wonderful hilt. At least I cannot tell you all. But there flashed to me, as I looked at your gift, the remembrance of your ancient proverb: '*The Sword is the Soul of the Samurai.*' And then it seemed to me that in the very choice of that exquisite souvenir you had symbolized something of your own souls. For we English also have some famous sayings and proverbs about swords. Our poets call a good blade 'trusty' and 'true'; and of our best friend we say, 'He is true as *steel*,' – signifying in the ancient sense the steel of a perfect sword, – the steel to whose temper a warrior could trust his honour and his life. And so in your rare gift, which I shall keep and prize while I live, I find an emblem of your true-heartedness and affection. May you always keep fresh within your hearts those impulses of generosity and kindliness and loyalty which I have learned to know so well, and of which your gift will ever remain for me the graceful symbol!

And a symbol not only of your affection and loyalty as students to teachers, but of that other beautiful sense of duty you expressed, when so many of you wrote down for me, as your dearest wish, the desire to die for His Imperial Majesty, your Emperor. That wish is holy: it means perhaps even more than you know, or can know, until you shall have become much older and wiser. This is an era of great and rapid change; and it is probable that many of you, as you grow up, will not be able to believe everything that your fathers believed before you; – though I sincerely trust you will at least continue always to respect the faith, even as you still respect the memory, of your ancestors. But however much the life of New Japan may change about you, however much your own thoughts may change with the times, never suffer that noble wish you ex-

pressed to me to pass away from your souls. Keep it burning there, clear and pure as the flame of the little lamp that glows before your household shrine.

Perhaps some of you may have that wish. Many of you must become soldiers. Some will become officers. Some will enter the Naval Academy to prepare for the grand service of protecting the empire by sea; and your Emperor and your country may even require your blood. But the greater number among you are destined to other careers, and may have no such chances of bodily self-sacrifice, – except perhaps in the hour of some great national danger, which I trust Japan will never know. And there is another desire, not less noble, which may be your compass in civil life: to live for your country though you cannot die for it. Like the kindest and wisest of fathers, your Government has provided for you these splendid schools, with all opportunities for the best instruction this scientific century can give, at a far less cost than any other civilized country can offer the same advantages. And all this in order that each of you may help to make your country wiser and richer and stronger than it has ever been in the past. And whoever does his best, in any calling or profession, to ennoble and develop that calling or profession, gives his life to his Emperor and to his country no less truly than the soldier or the seaman who dies for duty.

I am not less sorry to leave you, I think, than you are to see me go. The more I have learned to know the hearts of Japanese students, the more I have learned to love their country. I think, however, that I shall see many of you again, though I never return to Matsue: some I am almost sure I shall meet elsewhere in future summers; some I may even hope to teach once more, in the Government college to which I am going. But whether we meet again or not, be sure that my life has been made happier by knowing you, and that I shall always

love you. And, now, with renewed thanks for your beautiful gift, good-bye!

§ 3

The students of the Normal School gave me a farewell banquet in their hall. I had been with them so little during the year – less even than the stipulated six hours a week – that I could not have supposed they would feel much attachment for their foreign teacher. But I have still much to learn about my Japanese students. The banquet was delightful. The captain of each class in turn read in English a brief farewell address which he had prepared; and more than one of those charming compositions, made beautiful with similes and sentiments drawn from the old Chinese and Japanese poets, will always remain in my memory. Then the students sang their college songs for me, and chanted the Japanese version of 'Auld Lang Syne' at the close of the banquet. And then all, in military procession, escorted me home, and cheered me farewell at my gate, with shouts of '*Manzai!*' 'Good-bye!' 'We will march with you to the steamer when you go.'

§ 4

But I shall not have the pleasure of seeing them again. They are all gone far away – some to another world. Yet it is only four days since I attended that farewell banquet at the Normal School! A cruel visitation has closed its gates and scattered its students through the province.

Two nights ago, the Asiatic cholera, supposed to have been brought to Japan by Chinese vessels, broke out in different parts of the city, and, among other places, in the Normal School. Several students and teachers expired within a short while after having been attacked; others are even now lingering between life and death. The rest marched to the little healthy

village of Tamatsukuri, famed for its hot springs. But there the cholera again broke out among them, and it was decided to dismiss the survivors at once to their several homes. There was no panic. The military discipline remained unbroken. Students and teachers fell at their posts. The great college building was taken charge of by the medical authorities, and the work of disinfection and sanitation is still going on. Only the convalescents and the fearless samurai president, Saitō Kumatarō, remain in it. Like the captain who scorns to leave his sinking ship till all souls are safe, the president stays in the centre of danger, nursing the sick boys, overlooking the work of sanitation, transacting all the business usually intrusted to several subordinates, whom he promptly sent away in the first hour of peril. He has had the joy of seeing two of his boys saved.

Of another, who was buried last night, I hear this: Only a little while before his death, and in spite of kindliest protest, he found strength, on seeing his president approaching his bedside, to rise on his elbow and give the military salute. And with that brave greeting to a brave man, he passed into the Great Silence.

§ 5

At last my passport has come. I must go.

The Middle School and the adjacent elementary schools have been closed on account of the appearance of cholera, and I protested against any gathering of the pupils to bid me good-bye, fearing for them the risk of exposure to the chilly morning air by the shore of the infected river. But my protest was received only with a merry laugh. Last night the Director sent word to all the captains of classes. Wherefore, an hour after sunrise, some two hundred students, with their teachers, assemble before my gate to escort me to the wharf, near the

long white bridge, where the little steamer is waiting. And we go.

Other students are already assembled at the wharf. And with them wait a multitude of people known to me: friends or friendly acquaintances, parents and relatives of students, every one to whom I can remember having ever done the slightest favour, and many more from whom I have received favours which I never had the chance to return, – persons who worked for me, merchants from whom I purchased little things, a host of kind faces, smiling salutation. The Governor sends his secretary with a courteous message; the President of the Normal School hurries down for a moment to shake hands. The Normal students have been sent to their homes, but not a few of their teachers are present. I most miss friend Nishida. He has been very sick for two long months, bleeding at the lungs, but his father brings me the gentlest of farewell letters from him, penned in bed, and some pretty souvenirs.

And now, as I look at all these pleasant faces about me, I cannot but ask myself the question: 'Could I have lived in the exercise of the same profession for the same length of time in any other country, and have enjoyed a similar unbroken experience of human goodness?' From each and all of these I have received only kindness and courtesy. Not one has ever, even through inadvertence, addressed to me a single ungenerous word. As a teacher of more than five hundred boys and men, I have never even had my patience tried. I wonder if such an experience is possible only in Japan.

But the little steamer shrieks for her passengers. I shake many hands – most heartily, perhaps, that of the brave, kind President of the Normal School – and climb on board. The Director of the Jinjō-Chūgakkō, a few teachers of both schools, and one of my favourite pupils, follow; they are going to ac-

company me as far as the next port, whence my way will be over the mountains to Hiroshima.

It is a lovely vapoury morning, sharp with the first chill of winter. From the tiny deck I take my last look at the quaint vista of the Ōhashigawa, with its long white bridge, – at the peaked host of queer dear old houses, crowding close to dip their feet in its glassy flood, – at the sails of the junks, gold-coloured by the early sun, – at the beautiful fantastic shapes of the ancient hills.

Magical indeed the charm of this land, as of a land veritably haunted by gods: so lovely the spectral delicacy of its colours, – so lovely the forms of its hills blending with the forms of its clouds, – so lovely, above all, those long trailings and bandings of mists which make its altitudes appear to hang in air. A land where sky and earth so strangely intermingle that what is reality may not be distinguished from what is illusion, – that all seems a mirage, about to vanish. For me, alas! it is about to vanish for ever.

The little steamer shrieks again, puffs, backs into mid-stream, turns from the long white bridge. And as the grey wharves recede, a long *Aaaaaaaaaa* rises from the uniformed ranks, and all the caps wave, flashing their Chinese ideographs of brass. I clamber to the roof of the tiny deck cabin, wave my hat, and shout in English: 'Good-bye, good-bye!' And there floats back to me the cry: '*Manzai, manzai!*' [Ten thousand years to you! ten thousand years!] But already it comes faintly from far away. The packet glides out of the river-mouth, shoots into the blue lake, turns a pine-shadowed point; and the faces, and the voices, and the wharves, and the long white bridge have become memories.

Still for a little while looking back, as we pass into the silence of the great water, I can see, receding on the left, the crest of the ancient castle, over grand shaggy altitudes of pine, – and

the place of my home, with its delicious garden, – and the long blue roofs of the schools. These, too, swiftly pass out of vision. Then only faint blue water, faint blue mists, faint blues and greens and greys of peaks looming through varying distance, and beyond all, towering ghost-white into the east, the glorious spectre of Daisen.

And my heart sinks a moment under the rush of those vivid memories which always crowd upon one the instant after parting, – memories of all that make attachment to places and to things. Remembered smiles; the morning gathering at the threshold of the old yashiki to wish the departing teacher a happy day; the evening gathering to welcome his return; the dog waiting by the gate at the accustomed hour; the garden with its lotus-flowers and its cooing of doves; the musical boom of the temple bell from the cedar groves; songs of children at play; afternoon shadows upon many-tinted streets; the long lines of lantern-fires upon festal nights; the dancing of the moon upon the lake; the clapping of hands by the river shore in salutation to the Izumo sun; the endless merry pattering of geta over the windy bridge: all these and a hundred other happy memories revive for me with almost painful vividness, – while the far peaks, whose names are holy, slowly turn away their blue shoulders, and the little steamer bears me, more and more swiftly, ever farther and farther from the Province of the Gods.

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53. THE INFAMOUS JOHN FRIEND
by Mrs. R. S. Garnett

¶ This book, though in form an historical novel, claims to rank as a psychological study. It is an attempt to depict a character which, though destitute of the common virtues of every-day life, is gifted with qualities that compel love and admiration.

54. HORSES AND MEN
by Sherwood Anderson

¶ '*Horses and Men* confirms our indebtedness to the publishers who are introducing his work here. It has a unity beyond that of its constant Middle-west setting. A man of poetic vision, with an intimate knowledge of particular conditions of life, here looks out upon a world that seems singularly material only because he unflinchingly accepts its actualities.' *Morning Post*

55. SELECTED ESSAYS
by Samuel Butler

¶ This volume contains the following essays:

The Humour of Homer
Quis Desiderio . . .?
Ramblings in Cheapside
The Aunt, the Nieces, and the Dog
How to Make the Best of Life
The Sanctuary of Montrigone
A Medieval Girl's School
Art in the Valley of Saas
Thought and Language

56. A POET'S PILGRIMAGE
by W. H. Davies

¶ *A Poet's Pilgrimage* recounts the author's impressions of his native Wales on his return after many years' absence. The author tells of a walking tour he went through Wales. He stayed in cheap rooms and ate in the small wayside inns. The result is a vivid picture of the Welsh people, the towns and countryside.

57. GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN. First Series
by Lafcadio Hearn

¶ Nearly all the books which have been written about Japan have either been compiled from official records, or have been superficial sketches of a passing traveller. Of the inner life of the Japanese we know practically nothing, their religion, superstitions, ways of thought. In this book Lafcadio Hearn reveals something of the people and their customs as they are.

58 GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN. Second Series
by Lafcadio Hearn

¶ These are sketches by an acute observer and a master of English prose, of a Nation in transition—of the lingering remains of Old Japan, to-day only a memory, of its gardens, its beliefs, customs, gods and devils, of its wonderful kindliness and charm—and of the New Japan, struggling against odds towards new ideals.

59. THE TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO
Edited by Manuel Komroff

¶ When Marco Polo arrived at the court of the Great Khan, Pekin had just been rebuilt and made the capital of China. Kublai Khan was at the height of his glory. Marco Polo rose rapidly in favour and became governor of an important district. In this way he gained first-hand knowledge of a great civilization and described it in his travels with astounding accuracy and detail.

60. SELECTED PREJUDICES. Second Series
by H. L. Mencken

¶ 'What a master of the straight left in appreciation! Everybody who wishes to see how common sense about books and authors can be made exhilirating should acquire this delightful book.'
Morning Post

61. THE WORLD'S BACK DOORS
by Max Murray
With an introduction by HECTOR BOLITHO

¶ This book has been never before published. It is not an account so much of places as of people. The journey round the world was begun with about enough money to buy one meal, and continued for 66,000 miles. There are periods as a longshore man and as a sailor, and a Chinese guard and a night watchman, and as a hobo.

62. THE EVOLUTION OF AN INTELLECTUAL
by J. Middleton Murry

¶ These essays were written during and immediately after the Great War and published in 1920. The author says that they record the painful stages by which he passed from the so-called intellectual state to the state of being what he now considers to be a reasonable man.

63. THE RENAISSANCE
by Walter Pater

¶ This English classic contains studies of those 'supreme artists,' Michelangelo and Da Vinci, and of Botticelli, Della Robia, Mirandola, and others, who 'have a distinct faculty of their own by which they convey to us a peculiar quality of pleasure which we cannot get elsewhere.' There is no romance or subtlety in the work of these masters too fine for Pater to distinguish in superb English.

64. THE ADVENTURES OF A WANDERER
by Sydney Walter Powell

¶ The author has described the story of his roving years. Throwing up a position in the Civil Service in Natal because he preferred movement and freedom to monotony and security, he started his wanderings by enlisting in an Indian Ambulance Corps in the South African War. Afterwards he wandered all over the world.

65. 'RACUNDRA'S' FIRST CRUISE
by Arthur Ransome

¶ This is the story of the building of an ideal yacht which would be a cruising boat that one man could manage if need be, but on which three people could live comfortably. The adventures of the cruise are skilfully and vividly told.

66. THE MARTYRDOM OF MAN
by Winwood Reade

¶ 'Few sketches of universal history by one single author have been written. One book that has influenced me very strongly is *The Martyrdom of Man*. This "dates," as people say, nowadays, and it has a fine gloom of its own; but it is still an extraordinarily inspiring presentation of human history as one consistent process.' *H. G. Wells* in *The Outline of History*.

67. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARK RUTHERFORD With an introduction by H. W. Massingham

¶ Because of its honesty, delicacy and simplicity of portraiture, this book has always had a curious grip upon the affections of its readers. Every student must feel 'Ah, I have passed that way, have thought thus.' An English Amiel, inheriting to his comfort an English Old Crome landscape, he freed and strengthened his own spirit as he will his reader's.

68. THE DELIVERANCE
by Mark Rutherford

¶ Once read, Hale White [Mark Rutherford] is never forgotten. But he is not yet approached through the highways of English letters. To the lover of his work, nothing can be more attractive than the truth and delicacy of his art, and the pure and serene atmosphere of thought in which it moves.

69. THE REVOLUTION IN TANNER'S LANE
by Mark Rutherford

¶ 'Since Bunyan, English Puritanism has produced one imaginative genius of the highest order. To my mind, our fiction contains no more perfectly drawn pictures of English life in its recurring emotional contrast of excitement and repose more valuable to the historian, or more stimulating to the imaginative reader.' *H. W. Massingham*

70. ASPECTS OF SCIENCE. First Series
by J. W. N. Sullivan

¶ The papers which make up this volume have been selected because, although they deal with different aspects of various scientific ideas, yet they do illustrate, more or less, one point of view. This book tries to show one or two of the many reasons why science may be interesting for people who are not specialists as well as for those who are.

71. MASTRO DON GESUALDO
Giovanni Verga. Translated by D. H. Lawrence

¶ Verga, who died in 1922, is recognized in Italy as the greatest of Italian writers of fiction except Manzoni. He can claim a place beside Hardy and the Russians. 'It is a fine, full tale, a fine full picture of life, with a bold beauty of its own which Mr. Lawrence must have relished greatly as he translated it.' *Observer*

72. THE MISSES MALLETT
by E. H. Young

¶ The virtue of this quiet and accomplished piece of writing lies in its quality and in its character-drawing; to summarize it would be to give no idea of its charm. Neither realism nor romance, it is a book by a writer of insight and sensibility.

★

The foregoing list includes the titles of all volumes published up to the end of 1927. During the year 1928 many new volumes will be added. On receipt of a postcard, the publishers will be pleased to send a specimen copy of their House Journal, *Now and Then*, in which all additions to *The Travellers' Library* will be noted.